

Riders of Berk: Against All Odds

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Category: How to Train Your Dragon

Genre: Friendship, Hurt-Comfort

Language: English

Status: Completed

Published: 2013-05-31 23:17:28

Updated: 2013-08-23 20:30:33

Packaged: 2016-04-26 15:13:37

Rating: T

Chapters: 36

Words: 133,829

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: The "Riders of Berk" series including Shadow and Alyssa.

Join in as they venture and experience with their friends and

acquaintances around and past Berk. They'll push through each challenge... against all odds.

## 1. How to Start a Dragon Academy Pt 1

\*\*Okay, I've made my final desicion for the \*\*\_\*\*Riders of Berk\*\*\_\*\* series. I'll focus on the episodes that will be most crucial with Alyssa and Shadow's relationships with the other dragons and Vikings which will be most/all of the episodes. \*\*

\*\*Now, onto the story.\*\*

"What is taking him so long?" Snotlout asked and Hookfang shifted his weight impatiently. "Some things take time, Snotlout. Just stop and smell the roses." I said and Shadow huffed in his direction. "Oh, nevermind." I said, seeing who we were talking about just about to land next to us.

Hiccup came and parked Toothless next to the rest of us who were waiting on our dragons for him. "Okay, guys... best trick competition. Who's up first?" Hiccup asked. Fighlegs was about to say something but Snotlout stood up on Hookfang, "Me!" He called out, "Uh," Fishlegs said hesitantly, "Actually, I think it's-" "Me!" Snotlout said flexing.

"Sweet baby Thor in a thunderstorm. Go!" Astrid said, making a gesture for him to leave and at the same time I bluntly said, "Would you just go so we don't have to hear it anymore?" I gave a huge eyeroll. "Oh, don't worry. We'll go and when we go, Hookfang and I are gonna light the skies on \_fire!\_" He shouted as Hookfang dove off the cliff.

Hookfang flew between a bunch of large stone arches that were barely enough to fit himself and Snotlout in, I wouldn't be surprised if

there was a few scratches on them. They sky-rocketed up then dropped into the water. Right after, Hookfang came up and landed back where he previously stood.

"I'm alive?" Snotlout questioned then excitedly shouted "I'm alive!" When everyone stared at him. He immediately showed his tough demeanor again, "Of course I am." I rolled my eyes, "I bet you may need to change your pants, right?" I asked and the twins snickered. Snotlout, as usual, ignored me.

"It's my turn!" Fishlegs said excitedly, "Ready, Meatlug? Go." He said and the two flew in a small circle then landed again. "Yes! New personal best." He said and hugged Meatlug who licked him. The twins stared at him, a little disgusted but I didn't pay it any mind. People usually look at me like that after Shadow licks me so in my eyes it was endearing.

"My turn!" Ruffnut said, turning to Tuffnut. "No, my turn!" He said. I facepalmed and in unison, me and Hiccup said "Guys, same dragon." They fist-bumped and Tuffnut said "Oh, right." Then Belch and Barf flew off of the cliff, they immediately began witnessing technical issues.

"Go left!" Tuffnut said, "No, right!" Ruffnut argued, "N-no, right!" Tuffnut said, "Left!" The two-headed dragon got its necks tangled up and flew into a large stone arch that jutted from the ground, then their dragon began to spin, the twins falling onto their heads. The Zippelback untangled its heads and threw the twins in the air. "This is awesome and scary!" I could hear Tuffnut shout in the distance.

I chuckled and looked at Toothless, thinking back to when I was trying to fly him. "I know that feeling."

They continued to fall until the Zippelback caught one twin in each mouth, the twins were thrown onto their dragons' neck and they came back.

"We almost died." Ruffnut said, laying on her side of the dragon and panting along with her brother. "I know," He said, "Wanna go again?" He asked and Ruffnut immediately shot up, ready to go again but Astrid cut them off, "Hey, it's my turn." She said and looked at the rest of us. "You might want to take notes. Let's go." Stormfly flew off.

Each time Astrid made an order, the Nadder followed it. Stormfly dipped her tail in the water, twirled then performed an upward spiral. "All right, Stormfly!" She cheered on her dragon and returned back to us. "Yeah but could you do it without the dragon?" Snotlout asked and me and Astrid both took an arm to punch. "The point of this is to see what the dragon's tricks are, Snotlout." I said and he glared, wanting to ignore his own stupidity but failing.

"Anyway, I guess it's my turn." I said, Shadow spread his paws a little and flew straight towards the water below at a blinding speed and we crashed into the water, Shadow swam around and came up on the other side, climbing silently up the stone.

"Yep, she's dead." Tuffnut said.

Shadow had gotten back up and I whispered into his ear, "Scream." He let out a piercing screech and all of the riders fell off of their dragon and the dragons had stiffened in shock. A few groans from the riders was emitted, each followed along the lines of "Why would you do that?" or "This is the \_last\_ time we're inviting you anywhere!"

"Is stealth not a trick? We've been training for the wrong thing, bud." I said to Shadow who only laid down with his head on his paws.

"Okay," I began, getting back onto Shadow. "Ladies and dragons, I give you the last and certainly not least," I announced, "Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III!" "Yep, and we've got our work cut out for us, bud." Hiccup told Toothless who not a moment later, did a backflip before flying down the cliff.

"Hold on, did you call me a girl?" Snotlout asked defensively, finally acknowledging me. "You do have quite the hourglass figure." I said with a smirk. "I have a half a mind to beat you!" He said, leaning over his dragon. "Half a mind is right." I said and looked back at the twins and Fishlegs, "Suddenly he realizes." The others snickered at how I was continuously getting after Snotlout until I called aloud, "Ooh-ooh! Shut up, that was cool what Hiccup just did!"

"Why I ought to—" Snotlout started but Shadow hit the back of his head with his tail and gave him a mind-piercing glare. "I ought to just leave you alone... for right now." He said, trying to suddenly disappear. Shadow looked back at me with a concered expression as he looked me over, it was like he wanted to ask 'Did he hurt you?'

"I'm fine but it's only thanks to big, strong you." I said, flattering him. Shadow proudly puffed his chest out and sat up as he watched Hiccup and Toothless as they spiraled towards us and shot five or six times. "They're still the best." Astrid said, all I could do was nod.

Shadow felt jumpy all of a sudden and flew away from them, growling. "Sh-Shadow!" I called, "What's wrong?" He kept flying and I patted him. "Bud, what's wrong?" I asked and he shook himself. We took off far past the woods and towards a small cottage with a garden in front of us. He landed in front of it and we saw Shadow beginning to march up to the house. I ran infront of Shadow and began to push on him with his head.

"No, Shadow, what are you doing? You don't want to disturb—" I said but too late; the crotchetty, old man walked outside, "Mildew." I groaned. Shadow growled and arched his back, ready to fire at him. "No!" I said and jumped onto his mouth to clamp it shut.

"What's all this here?!" Mildew shouted. "You frightened him, is all!" I said, saying the first thing that came to mind. "I want these dragons off of my property and off of this island!" He shouted and Shadow didn't like the way he was talking and let out a muffled growl, followed by a screech. "Get this filthy beast out of here!" He said, Shadow huffed at him.

I held Shadow close and looked him in the eyes, trying to calm him. It worked for a bit as his breathing eased up significantly. "Fine. Shadow, get out of here."

Shadow kept Mildew locked in a glare and finally began to turn his back to him and I finally let his mouth go, climbing onto his back.

>"Well, let's go, boy." I said, Shadow spread his wings then jumped back towards Mildew and pinned the old man to the ground. I don't know what possessed me to look back but I did; seeing that his tail had a boot-print on it.<p>

I'll admit that I was pissed but I had to focus on getting out of here before things got ugly. "Shades, off!" I said, pulling on the reins. "Down, boy!" Shadow began charging up one of his plasma blasts, "Shadow, no!" I shouted at the top of my lungs and it had startled Shadow, causing him to jerk a little but not a moment he flew away with a huff.

Shadow let out an angered huff. "I don't care how much he deserves it." I said, "In times of war we must never forget compassion." I reminded him and he laid his ears against his head guiltily. "I'm not mad at you." I said. "I just wish that you'd listen sometimes because that would've gotten us into some serious trouble."

I returned home just to see everyone fighting with a dragon over food, laundry and other basic necessities. I dropped my shoulders, "Hold on, buddy." I said and began walking down the street. A woman was fighting with a Terror over a biscuit. I rolled my eyes and scratched the Terror's chin, causing it to let go of it. It looked at me then at the woman before jumping after the bread again but I caught it. "Go inside." I said to her, she did so and slammed the door.

"You stop fighting with people for food." I said and let the Terror go. It looked at me for a moment then around us at all of the other dragons causing chaos and flew off to join them again.

My mind didn't stick with that long, though. I saw a large bundle of dragons fly overhead, that could only mean... "Everyone take cover!" I shouted and everyone scattered. I rolled towards Bucket and Mulch. They held shields over their heads like an umbrella as the dragon feces fell from the sky.

"Hey, Mulch." I heard a slightly awkward voice. "Hey, Bucket. Sorry about the—" He pointed up. I looked over at him directly, "Hey, Hic. Enjoying the rain?" I asked, he was about to answer but some fell right in front of him and he backed up. "Oh, poop." He said, "I'll take that as a 'no'." "Every day at three." Bucket said. "They're regular. A tip of the cap."

I noticed something and looked down, "Uh, Bucket?" I said. Bucket shook his head. "Not now, I'm talking to Hiccup about- uh, what was I talking about?" I facepalmed, "You weren't talking about anything!" "You don't have to shout." He said, putting his hook hand to the bucket on his head. "Terrors took the fish." I said, looking at the torn open sack he held.

"What?" Mulch asked. "Look." I said, pointing to the Terrors who flew together and went behind a building to continue eating. Bucket picked up the torn sack, "I ate it already?" He asked, "Did I enjoy it?" I facepalmed again and opened my mouth to speak again but Hiccup placed a hand over my mouth and let me say what I had to without anybody

completely understanding. Once I began panting, Hiccup removed his hand and I took a deep breath, "And another thing—" I began before Hiccup covered my mouth again.

"So much to say over fish?" Mulch asked. Hiccup nodded, "She has a lot to say about everything." Then whispered, "Don't get her started on Mildew." I was finally done speaking and panted again but I also heard Hiccup mention Mildew so I had to say something. "And let me tell you something about Mildew!" I said and had my mouth covered again.

"Shh!" Hiccup said, "He's coming through." He removed his hand again, I chuckled feignly, "Do I look like I care? I want him to hear!" I said, and took a deep breath, "Mildew is a—" Shadow roared and everyone stared at me, startled. Shadow came flying over to me, glaring at Mildew with a deep, throaty growl.

"I'm taking Shades home now. Before things get ugly." I said. Hiccup nodded, "Understandable." "Come on, boy." I said and walked, he didn't move two inches away from me. I opened the door and he walked in, I glared back at Mildew and heard something about getting rid of the dragons.

I shook it off and shut the door, sitting with the two on the floor. "Send the dragons away." I huffed. "I'll send you off on a boat full of venomous snakes." I said then tried to shake the thought away of the dragons leaving, "He's only ignorant." I tried to convince myself but it didn't work. Mildew wanted these dragons gone and nothing was going to change his mind.

## 2. How to Start a Dragon Academy Pt 2

"Al, you okay in there?" Hiccup knocked on the door, he must have heard my angry grumblings about Mildew. Hearing his voice, I calmed and opened the door.

"Yeah, Hic. I'm fine." I said, Shadow had his lips pursed but not at me or Hiccup; at the thought of Mildew. I nodded, "Yeah, I know. I hate him too." I said, Hiccup grabbed my upper-arm and tugged me outside. "Dad and Gobber are having a discussion about what to do with the dragons. If I need help with anything, I already know that I can count on you. Please come."

I looked back at Shadow then nodded, "Okay. I heard Mildew stir up the whole village earlier about how the dragon's are just destructive beasts. I think we deserve a say so in this."

"Especially us. We know the dragons better than anybody. There's not a better Viking for the job." I nodded, "True that."

So Hiccup and I snuck into his house, stealthily climbing up into the room. Apparently, Stoic had no idea that Hiccup left and having me around could raise some tension which is understandable; Stoic and I have never had a... stable relationship. Shadow climbed in through the window without making much noise at all.

So Hiccup and I stood on the stairs without being seen, our dragons behind us and ears perked with every word being said.

"We can make signs." Stoic suggested.

"Signs?" Gobber questioned. "For dragons?"

"No, for the people."

"Signs? For Vikings? We aren't big readers, Stoic."

I laughed silently as the two continued to make suggestions. Well, Stoic made suggestions, Gobber pointed out the obvious reasons on why he couldn't do that.

"We can make nets." Stoic brought up.

"You do know they breathe fire, right?"

Now, Stoic was getting supremely frustrated. We were at peace with the dragons and as much as he didn't want to admit it; he enjoyed having the lovable, fire-breathing, flying pets around.

"I know very well they breathe fire, Gobber." He tossed a chair back, almost hitting Hiccup and I. "Maybe Mildew was right. We have to get rid of them."

Hiccup decided to speak up, "Hey, dad, wait. What if Al and I deal with the dragons?" Stoic cocked a brow at his son, "You two?" Hiccup shrugged with a confident grin, "Who else? If anyone can control them, we can." He pet Toothless' head who had just walked around him. Shadow put his head over my shoulder and nuzzled me. "We're the best man and woman for the job."

"You aren't a man yet, Hiccup." Stoic said. "Not if you don't give me the chance to be." Hiccup stepped up to his father.

Stoic and Gobber exchanged a glance then Stoic nodded at Hiccup, "Fine. You'll have your chance, starting tomorrow." Hiccup's face lit up that his father was giving him a chance to be a man. Stoic apparently had to ask Hiccup one last question.

"I'm unsure about Alyssa being a woman, though. Has she...?" Hiccup's face became twisted with a bit of disgust at what his father might have been getting at. "I have no clue." He said, wanting to shake off what his father had been getting at.

"Um, hello? I'm right here." I said, "If you're asking about the bleeding; yes. I hate every second of it." I folded my arms, "Besides, I don't know what the monthly has to do with me being a woman." "Most female Vikings are more mature after they reach it. I don't know how that worked out for you, though." Stoic said, making me narrow my eyes slightly.

"Anyway," I started, wanting to divert attention away from our latest subject. "Will I be able to help or not?" Stoic nodded, "No matter what I say, you'll do it anyway." I smirked with a gesture to Stoic, "The man knows me."

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><p>The next day, Hiccup stood in front of the village being ravaged by dragons with his hands on his hips and a grin on his face. "Well,

Al. There's going to be some changes around here."<p>

I nodded, "For sure. I mean, how hard can it be to control a bunch of dragons?"

Then both of our eyes widened when a Nadder snapped its jaws at a woman holding a basket of fresh biscuits and bread rolls. "Get! Go on, get!" She said, running inside to get away from the purple dragon.

Hiccup and I ran up to assist immediately, "Hold on, we'll help you." Hiccup said. The Nadder turned to us, "No." I said, placing a hand on its snout and calming it. Hiccup nodded with a growing grin, "All right."

It would have been 'all right' if a chicken hadn't ran past us, clucking wildly. It had caught the Nadder's attention and made it chase after the feathered bird while snapping its jaws.

A blue Gronckle burst through a fruit basket and ran after the purple Nadder, Hiccup turned his attention slightly upwards and saw a Nightmare fighting with another purple Nadder. A flaming sheep fell off of one of the ramps and when I turned to the side, a yak was bucking wildly with a turquoise Nightmare following it. "That's not good." I said, awfully Hiccup-like.

Hiccup jumped over a knocked over barrel, running after the sheep. "Toothless, stop up that fight!" He ordered, "Al, get the Nightmare and I'll put out the sheep!" I nodded, "Sure thing."

I ran past the bucking yak and stood in front of the Nightmare, "No." I placed a hand on its snout and it huffed slightly, still wanting to get after the yak. I gave him what only can be described as 'the mom look' and placed the hand firmly on his snout. "No." I said more sternly.

The Nightmare backed down a bit and I removed my hand, "Good boy. Don't let me catch you doing anything like that again." I said, the Nightmare pulled its head back and flew off. Well, I didn't mean to do that.

I turned and saw Hiccup carrying a bucket of water, only to be knocked over by the flaming sheep. He slid down a hill on his back, spilling the bucket of water.

"I've got it! I've got it!" I said, readying myself to jump at the sheep so it stopped running. I leapt at it and tackled it to the ground, holding it down so it didn't run away. I smelt something burning.

"I smell barbecue." I said then looked at my hand that was on the sheep's flaming wool. "Oh." I had a severe delayed reaction then suddenly pulled my burning hand off of the sheep. "Ow! Ow, ow, ow." I clenched my hand up, holding it to my side.

"Hiccup, come on. Where are—" Water splashed onto the sheep and I. I looked up at him and he began to lower the bucket. "Sorry about that." He sighed, standing straight up again. I let go of the sheep, letting it run free. I stood up, "This is going to be a long day." I said, Hiccup nodded. "No kidding."

Shadow flew in front of us and made a head gesture to the sky. "What now?" Hiccup asked. We looked up, suddenly realizing that it was three o'clock. I threw my head back, "Oh, come on." Hiccup stood in place, looking up at a shadow slowly getting larger.

"Oh no." He said then there was a splat.

I shuddered, "Hiccup, you are so lucky that I love you so much or else I wouldn't have took that hit for you." My teeth were clenched tightly. I never thought that I'd have dragon feces on me. I don't mean to go into detail but it was steaming hot and it was slimy and... traumatizing.

"I'm just going to... wash this off." I said, teeth still clenched then walked away.

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><p>Later on, I was all cleaned up. It was late and I was in Hiccup's room, sitting on his bed. "Oh, everything hurts." He said, rolling a shoulder. Then he leant over and took off his metal leg, "Even this hurts." I nodded, cracking the bones in my wrist. "I thought that you <em>loved</em> pain. Back in the arena a while back when you had first met Toothless, you said you loved it."

He threw himself back on his bed, "I was being sarcastic. I'm too tired to argue, anyhow." He rolled onto his stomach. I nodded, "True." I looked him over, "Want a massage?" I asked randomly and his head shot up. "What?!" His voice rose a little from shock.

"A massage. I promise that I won't behave inappropriately." I said, he put himself back down. "That ship has sailed." He muttered. "Hiccup, come on. I massage Shadow from time to time and it's rather relaxing to him."

Shadow nodded to Hiccup who stared at him for a moment then placed his head down, "Fine." I nodded, "Sure thing. Soft, medium or hard?" He tensed up. "What?" "Soft, medium or hard?" I repeated.

"Uh... soft?" He questioned.

"Fine, soft." I said and began to rub at his back through the wool vest, he hissed in pain. "You said you'd be soft!" He pointed out. "I am. Good thing you didn't get hard, huh?" I asked then realized how dirty that remark was. "Uh, scratch that." I said, I could see that he was blushing. Heck, I was too. I really have to think about what I say before I say it.

"Feeling any better yet?" I asked, this time he actually let out a soft sigh. "Much better." He laid his head against his arms, "Where have you been hiding those magical hands?"

"In my shirt sleeves and pockets." I responded.

"Too relaxed to argue." He sighed.

Toothless had scales over one of his eyes raised and Shadow didn't mind at all. He was lying down on his stomach watching.

I decided to get a little rougher with the rubbing and he let out a moan of content. Shadow's ears perked and Toothless drew his head back. I shook my head at them, continuing the massage.

"Relaxed yet?" I asked, he let out another soft moan. "Very much so." He sighed. "I wish there was some music playing or something to make this more enjoyable." I smiled, "I can call Gobber in here to play his flute. Oh, he lost it. Nevermind." He sighed again.

"Hiccup?" Astrid's voice called from downstairs. Hiccup began to freak immediately and pushed himself up and me away from him. He stood up and dusted himself off, "How do I look, guys? I don't look too beat up, do I?" He asked. All of us made a face at him; the ones that effected him the most were the dragons faces.

"Oh, great. Dragon pity." He said and Astrid entered the room. "Oh. Hey, Astrid. What a nice surprise." He said. "What's up, Astrid?" She waved to me, "So, how was your guys's day?" She folded her arms at us with a smirk.

Hiccup frowned, "Uneventful. Hung around the plaza. You know."

"Yeah, I do know." She said, "We saw you guys out there." She picked a piece of rubble off of Hiccup's wool vest. "Hard to believe you're still standing."

He sighed overdramatically and threw himself backwards on the bed, almost hitting me with his head. "I'm going to be seeing flaming sheep in my dreams for the next month." I sighed, "I'm going to be dreaming of \_holding \_them for the next month. If I get any sleep at all."

"Hiccup! Alyssa!" Stoic called, coming upstairs.

Hiccup stood up quickly as did I.

"You two, what's going on out there? The plaza looks like a war zone!" He exclaimed.

I looked at Hiccup and made a gesture for him to go on. He scowled at me, upset that I didn't back him up. He looked back at Stoic and explained; "I know it looks bad." "Really bad." Astrid added to us quietly. Hiccup bit his lip.

I jumped in to help Hiccup. "This is only phase one of the master plan." I said, he looked a little relieved that I actually helped him this time. "Oh, so you \_do\_ have a plan?" He asked, Hiccup and I looked at each other, actually aware that we were on each other's side.

"Yep." I said. If I didn't then Hiccup would've questioned himself then awkwardly add in 'yeah'. He took over afterwards, "It's very complex. Lots of drawings, several moving parts." He put his hands behind his back. "Yeah, it's, uh, pretty wild."

On second thought, I should've kept it up and taken over the conversastion completely. Hiccup's a terrible liar.

"Uh-huh." Stoic nodded. "It'd better word because Mildew stirred up

the whole island." I growled at the mention of his name and opened my mouth to say something but Astrid placed a hand firmly over my mouth, preventing Stoic from understanding exactly what I was saying.

"If you two don't get these dragons under control, they'll be calling for their heads." He walked out of the room.

"Don't worry, bud. Your head's not going anywhere." Hiccup assured Toothless.

"You guys do know that there's like a bazillion dragons out there and only two of you?" She brushed her hair out of her face. "I hope you know what you're doing."

I looked at Shadow who had a fierce fire burning in his eyes. I nodded at him, "I know, Shades. Don't worry, though. They'll have to get through me to get to you. I'll go to my grave for you." One of my hands clenched as the other lovingly stroked his nose.

### 3. How to Start a Dragon Academy Pt 3

So, Hiccup had led all of the teens into the old arena where the dragons used to be killed. I didn't like being in here; it's always felt uneasy in here to me, haunting even. He had just explained to us what we were going to do about the dragons in Berk.

"That's your plan?" Ruffnut asked. "Training dragons?"

"I thought that's what we were already doing. Have I been doing it wrong all along?" I asked with furrowed brows. My question was ignored.

"Here? Where we used to kill them?" Tuffnut followed after Ruffnut.

Hiccup was carrying a basket to Toothless who watched him intently. "Right. Because we don't do that anymore." He said, placing the basket on the ground. "That's why it's available." Toothless sniffed at the basket.

"No." I said to him. His ears laid back and he pulled his head from the basket.

"Actually, Hiccup. The dragons do seem a little nervous." Astrid pointed out to Hiccup. I looked at the dragons who had their eyes shifting, ears laid back submissively, rather frightened to say the least.

"That's because they're very sensitive." Fishlegs pointed out. "Meatlug especially. She lost a cousing here." His voice became hushed, "We try not to talk about it."

"It's amazing your dad just gave us the arena." Astrid said. I snorted with laughter and she looked at me, "What is it?" I waved it off, "It's nothing."

Hiccup took a deep breath, "Well Astrid, it would be amazing that he gave us the arena, if he did. Yeah. But he didn't so that's another thing we should try not to talk about." He grinned

sheepishly.

"Wait, so we're going behind your father's back?" Astrid asked.

"There you go, talking about it." He replied, not really wanting to talk about it himself. I bit down on my lip to keep from laughing at her facial expression. "All right," Hiccup began towards the rest of us, "Everybody, here's the thing; the dragons are out of control. We want them to live in our world without destroying it but they can't without our help."

"In case you guys weren't paying close enough attention yesterday in the plaza; they've been blowing things up in the village and we have to do something about it." I added.

"Got it; help dragons blow things up!" Tuffnut said excitedly. "We can totally do that."

I sighed irritably and shook my head.

"No," Hiccup said, "I believe she tried to say—" Ruffnut cut him off.

"Here's what we're gonna do; first, we make them really, really angry." I face-palmed and Hiccup gawked in disbelief, I turned to him. "Hiccup, it's the twins. You can't look at them like that." I said, shaking my head. "No problem." Tuffnut replied to his sister. "We anger everybody."

"Guys, this is serious." Hiccup said, snapping the twins out of their daydream. "Mildew wants all of our dragons caged. And I don't know about you but that's not okay with me."

"You're right, she's sorry." Tuffnut said, Ruffnut glared at him.

"Okay, next problem; the dragons are eating everything in sight." Hiccup took a biscuit out of the basket he was carrying earlier, Toothless licked his lips. Shadow stood in front of him and shook his head, Toothless didn't acknowledge what Shadow had done and poked his head up over him. Shadow showed immediate displeasure.

"Shades, come here." I said, Shadow looked between Toothless and I but didn't budge. What's up with him? He normally listens to me, I wonder what's wrong.

"No, Al. It's fine." Hiccup said, "Could Shadow happen to want a biscuit?" He held the bread in front of Shadow's face, he didn't budge or show any signs that he was going to eat it. Toothless had a different look on his face, it said 'MMM. YUMMY-YUMMY FOOD.'

"Al, he's not taking the biscuit." Hiccup whispered to me. I shrugged, "I don't know what's up with him. Give it to Toothless." I said. "Okay." Hiccup replied awkwardly and held the bread over Shadow's head so Toothless could get it. "When a dragon takes something he's not supposed to have—" Toothless had reached for the biscuit but Shadow took it before he did and held it to Hiccup so he could take it. "He'll bring it back to you." Hiccup added with drooped shoulders.

"Al, he's kind of embarrassing me." Hiccup muttered loud enough for me to hear as he took the biscuit from Shadow. "Shadow, let Hiccup work." I said, he sighed and trudged to me before looking disappointedly at Toothless. "Hiccup knows what he's doing." I assured softly.

Hiccup cleared his throat, "Okay, anyways, when a dragon grabs something it's not supposed to have you can get him to drop it by giving him a little scratch just below the chin." He explained as he preformed on Toothless. Getting him to take the biscuit and make him drop it with the chin scratch.

"See?" I asked Shadow, he put his head down then looked back up. "Told you he had it under control."

"No, no, no, no, no." Snotlout said and approached Hiccup. "Maybe that works for you and Toothless but Hookfang and me; we do things a little different." He took the bread from Hiccup and tossed it at Hookfang who caught it. "When I want this big boy to do something I just get right in his face and drop that right now! You hear me?!" He demanded towardrs Hookfang who dropped his head, spit out the biscuit and bit down on Snotlout's body, lifting him off of the ground and shaking him with little force.

"See? He dropped it." Snotlout muffledly pointed out.

Tuffnut chuckled, "Should we help him?" I shook my head, "Yeah, in a minute." Astrid said.

"All right. We've got a lot of training to do but together we can keep these dragons under control." Hiccup said, holding up a biscuit in each hand.

"Can somebody do that chin-scratchy thing? Hello? You guys still there?" Snotlout asked and Hookfang shook him again. I went over and picked the biscuit up off of the ground near Hookfang, "I doubt this is any good. It's been on the ground. We're taught not to let things go to waste on Berk." I looked up at Hookfang, "You want it? Well, half of it?"

Hookfang spit Snotlout out with more force than I had imagined and waited for me to part the biscuit. I ripped it in half, giving one half to him which he gladly took. I pointed a finger at him when he was done eating, though. "I don't want you to eat anything stored on Berk that isn't handed to you, okay?" I made it clear with Hookfang who nodded, understanding.

\* \* \*

><p>After our little training session, we walked back to an unusually quiet and deserted Berk. "This is odd." I said as we walked through the empty plaza, "Really odd. Where are the dragons?" Hiccup asked.</p>

"That training was easier than we thought." Ruffnut said with a grin.

"Lunch?" Snotlout asked.

I shook my head, "No, no. Where could the dragons be? About now, a purple Nadder is supposed to be at that house there, trying to take food from some lady."

"Al, Shadow's always by your side. Where's he now?" Astrid asked, I shrugged. "He took off flying earlier just after our training session was done. He's been acting weird today."

"If him and the other dragons aren't here then where are they?" Hiccup asked and a small explosion went off in the near distance. "Something tells me that way." Astrid put her hands on her hips.

We took off as fast as we could towards the explosion and saw our dragons eating at the food that was once inside of the storage house.

"Stormfly?" Astrid asked, she looked up from her meal at her rider.

"Hookfang." Snotlout said in shock and disappointment. I shook my head at the dragon. "I said 'don't eat anything not given to you.'" I said to Hookfang, "Who gave this to you?" He pulled his head back at my stern voice. "This looks too disasterous to look like it was given to you. I'm disappointed, Hookfang. In all of you."

Noise came from inside of the burnt and torn storage house, I looked inside to see Stoic tossing a pillar from one side of the storage house to the other. Hiccup rushed to my side just in time to see.

"They've eaten everything." Stoic said. "We've got nothing left for the freeze."

Mildew had appeared out of nowhere and I jumped, "I warned you, Stoic but did you listen to me? No. You put a bunch of teenagers in charge!" He said the last part with venom, almost all of us had glared at him. "Now, look what the dragons have done. Caging is too good for the beasts. "And you're a nasty, old witch-man that happens to show up at the most inconvenient of times. You want to know what else? I think, no, I know that-"

Astrid covered my mouth and whispered to me, "We all have our own choice words to say, tell them to him later or through a nasty letter." She let me go. I nodded, "Got it." I mouthed.

"Dad, I swear we can fix this. We were just starting to-" Hiccup attempted to reason with his father but yet again, failing.

"Enough. How can I trust you two to control all of the dragons when you couldn't even control your own?" He gestured to our Night Furies. Toothless took a fish from Shadow who glared at him as he ate it.

"Oh, Toothless." Hiccup sighed.

"Shadow, I really expected better from you." I scolded but in my mind I knew that this was unlike him. He didn't take the biscuit earlier, he looked at him with disappointment when he took the fish from him right now. He was pretty disappointed with all of the dragons. It was almost like he knew that it wasn't his.

"Bucket, Mulch! Man the boards. We need another catch." Stoic demanded as he tossed baskets at them. They caught them with ease.

"It's too late Stoic." Mulch said. "It took us six months to catch all of that fish." "Don't tell me it's too late!" Stoic said with frustration. "We've got to try!" "Of course we do." Mulch chuckled nervously then pulled Bucket down by the beard.

"Don't tell the cheif it's too late. You're always so negative." He banged his hook-hand against Bucket's bucket. "I don't know what it is with me." He repied.

Stoic walked outside and began to fill up a cart with the empty baskets. "Dad, please. You gotta listen to me. Al and I know dragons better than -"

"Not now, Hiccup. I have a village to feed. The dragons have done enough damage. By tonight, I want every one of them caged. Understand?" Stoic asked.

This was one of the only times where Hiccup gave Stoic a dirty look or something close to it. Mildew walked around him and I ran up to Hiccup's side, glaring at Mildew. "Can we help you?" I snarled at him.

"Yes. We can't just cage these dragons. You need to send them away now!" He demanded. Many of the other Vikings cheered. "All right. We'll cage them tonight and in the morning these two will send them off the island." Toothless nuzzled against Hiccup's hand, Shadow stood close to me but not too close, considering Mildew's distance from me. Stoic turned his back to us again. "Sorry, son." He said.

I glared at the old man and pulled him away from Hiccup, "Wait until we're alone. I promise I'll destroy you." He chuckled, "You and what army?" He gestured to the Vikings cheering for the dragons' exile. Rage built inside me at a rapid rate.

"Mildew, I swear I'm going to-" A tug at the back of my shirt snapped me out of it along with a soft warble. I turned to Shadow, he grinned sadly at me and tugged at my wrist, away from Mildew and the other Vikings.

Once we were alone I frowned, "Shades, I don't want to say good-bye." He stood on his back legs and used a paw to bat at the fang on his collar, his sad grin was still on his face as he lowered himself to all-fours. His head tilted up enough to lick my face, I stroked his ears. "I'm going to miss you." He nodded.

"You know, when I first saw you I thought 'Oh, crap. Night Fury that I landed on after jumping off of a cliff!' When I saw you in the woods the next day and you were taking food right out of my hand, I felt so close to you. Then on the day that I found you bleeding, my heart broke. I hated seeing you in so much pain. I already told Lightning and the kids good-bye, not you too."

Shadow wrapped a paw around my back and pulled me close with a sad bunch of whimpers. I wrapped my arms around his large neck with tears brimming my eyes, "You'll never forget me, right? I know I won't

forget about you." I choked. I felt him shake his head and hold me tighter. "Mildew is such a jerk." Shadow nodded against me and let go, he licked me again and made a head gesture towards the great hall.

"Sure, let's go." I said, seeing how everyone else was heading that way anyway. We slowly made our way over there, exchanging sad glances at each other until we made it inside. I sat with Hiccup and the others, Shadow laid near the fire, staring at it intently.

"Al, do you want to talk about it?" Hiccup whispered to me. I laid my arms out in front of me and put my chin on them, I didn't vocally answer him. "It's understandable that you don't but you're usually a little more outspoken on things and- ow!" Astrid smacked his arm, making him flinch. "I can take a hint, Astrid. She's simply a childhood friend that I want to talk to." "She'll talk when she's ready." She replied to him.

"Didn't mean to get you hurt, Hic." I said softly, my eyes looking like they were staring off into space. He shook his head, "I wouldn't want to talk about it much, either but I really have to. There's too many people around for it right now."

I focused my attention on Shadow, still staring into the fire. "I'll be back." I said, getting up and going over to Shadow. I sat by him and looked into the fire.

"I can hardly stay away from you now. I don't know how I'll act when you're gone." I said, he nodded sadly and laid his head down. I stroked down his head, ears, back and wings. "I wish you could talk back to me." I said and put my head on top of his. He sighed, probably thinking the same thing. Shadow laid his head against me and nuzzled up against my side. I continued to pet him, "I love you, Shadow." I said and he nodded, he was probably wanting to say the same thing to me but couldn't. "Hopefully we can figure something out before tonight." I said, petting his back. He didn't show much of a response, he just leaned on me further.

So after some time had passed in the great hall, most of us remained silent out of sadness as I was and a few others were more vocal about their feelings.

"I can't believe we have to send them away." Snotlout said, finally showing his frustration but only slightly. He had to keep his image.

"It's going to be weird. I got used to Stormfly's face being the first thing I see every morning." Astrid stirred her cocoa, the cream and slight foam making the shape of a Nadder.

"Shadow sometimes woke me up by shoving me out of bed. That was only when I didn't sleep on the floor with him. When we did sleep on the floor; he would curl his body around me protectively." I said, staring at him as he rested near Toothless.

"Every night before I went to sleep, Meatlug would lick my feet." Fishlegs said, the twins exchanged a very weirded out look. He devastatedly cried out, "Who's gonna do that now?" Ruffnut grinned, "I volunteer Tuffnut." She nudged him, trying to lift his spirits a little even if it was just to argue with him but it didn't work, he

was too down to get excited. "Whatever. What time should I be there?"

Astrid stood up, "Come on, guys. Let's get this over with." "This is the worst day of my life!" Fishlegs said. "We're never gonna see our dragons again!" They continued to walk out of the door and left me and Hiccup with our Night Furies at our table until he stood up.

"We can't let that happen." He said. "Toothless is one of the best friends I've ever had." He crouched and pet Toothless's head, I got up, "I know the feeling." Shadow purred at me before I'd even knelt to pet him.

"Oh, Toothless and Shadow. I'll miss you two so much." Mildew's voice rang through. The dragons growled upon hearing him, Hiccup and I stood up and glared him down.

"You kids know what your mistakes were? Thinking dragons could be trained. A dragon's gonna do what a dragon's gonna do. It's their nature." Those words hit me like a ton of bricks. Yeah, they'll do what they're gonna do all right but maybe...

Hiccup's glare hardened on Mildew, "And nature always wins." Mildew said and walked away from us. Toothless's growl got louder and Shadow glared then stuck his tail out, almost tripping the old man enough to fall over. I let out a rough sigh as the old battle axe walked away.

The door had opened just then and a wind blew out the fire. Shadow and Toothless turned towards the outed fire and fired into it themselves to relight it then they smiled at each other gently.

An older Viking woman was shocked that they'd helped. "Oh, thank you both." I turned towards Hiccup to say something but he beat me to it, "You know what, Al? Mildew is absolutely right." He turned to Toothless, "Come on, bud." He ran out of the door. I looked at Shadow, "Might as well try." I smirked, his eyes lit up and we ran out of the door following Hiccup.

We flew towards the arena where we'd discussed that we'd lock up the dragons. We saw human figures outside of the arena in the moonlight and there were dragons inside.

"Hold it!" Hiccup called out then we swooped in on them. Hiccup got off of Toothless, ran at the lever opened the gate back up. "We're not locking them up." He said.

"What happened? Did you change your father's mind?" Astrid asked excitedly then her tone dialed down. "Or are we going behind his back again?"

"Uh, one of those." He responded as awkward as always. I looked over at her, "Tell me, which do you think." She nodded, "Thought as much."

"Look, guys." He caught our attention again. "The dragons are gonna do what they're gonna do. It's their nature, we just need to learn how to use it." Everyone's eyes widened, they were listening. "Okay, Hic." I chuckled, "Let's hear your master plan."

After morning had come, Hiccup was sending everyone out to do their own thing. "Well, Al. Anything you can think of doing?" I shrugged, "What's available?" He thought, "Help Fishlegs herd the dragons over to Mildew's garden so when three o'clock comes around..." I saw where it was going. "Sure thing, Hic. Let's go." Shadow flew off.

"Yo, Fishlegs! Need some help herding the dragons?" I asked, going to help regardless. "Sure." He replied, "Those Nadders are almost breaking off, could you herd them back in?" I nodded, "Sure thing." Shadow flew to the Nadders' side and growled them back into place, "Do you think this will work?" Fishlegs asked. I nodded, "For sure."

"Yo, Fishlegs, three o'clock." I said, getting the dragons over Mildew's garden. "Okay, Meatlug, let her rip." He said to her. "Shadow, do what you gotta do." I didn't feel a shift in his muscles or anything, he just kept flying. If he did go, he sure was casual about it.

We flew our dragons back to Berk to the restored storage room. The twins had just herded a bunch of wild boars inside; they'll be taken care of later. I high-fived Astrid and Fishlegs. "So far so good." I said, leaning over on Shadow again.

"That was awesome!" Fishlegs cheered, Astrid looked up at Hiccup who was just now landing Toothless. "How'd you know that was gonna work?" She asked, I said the answer in my mind but let Hiccup tell her. "Because they're dragons and they're gonna do what dragons do. We just need to learn how to use it."

Then Stoic showed up with the infamous Mildew; not looking very pleased. "Stoic, those dragons don't look like they're in cages to me." He complained. Shadow put his ears down against his head and growled softly, I pet his head. "Don't worry, bud. It'll be fine."

I hope dragons can't read minds because in my mind, I was saying 'Oh, crap.'

So, now here we are standing miserably inside of the dragon arena. I wasn't listening to a word being said, my eyes were locked on the dragons inside of the cage. They all looked so miserable, more than us. All of their faces covered by the shadows of the cage, looking sadly at their riders or at the ground. My eyes were locked with Shadow's. I don't care what anyone says, I'm keeping him and I'll hide Toothless in the cove again.

Gobber's voice made me jump. "You're getting a dragon training academy!" Wow, I know that I have selective hearing but I didn't think that it was that bad.

"Gobber!" Stoic was probably pouting through his beard, "I wanted to tell them!"

We'd pretty much all broke out into large grins, absolutely ecstatic and overfilled with joy that our scaly friends weren't going anywhere. I smiled at the dragons inside of the cage, they heard as well and were itching to get out.

"I'm sorry, all right?" Gobber apologized to Stoic, "Go ahead." Stoic was internally having a fit. "Well, you told most of it." "You can

tell them the part on how proud you are of them." "Gobber!" Stoic finally said with frustration but quickly let it go.

"Hiccup, what he said. You've all made me proud. This dragon training academy is for you." He released the dragons who ran right to their rider... some faster than others and knocking them to the ground, Shadow being one.

"You're not leaving!" I said, petting his ears. "Oh, thank the Gods." I said, wiggling out from under Shadow who licked my face all over. "I'd be so lost without you guys." I said, wrapping my arms around Shadow's neck.

"Now, all you have to do is train them." I heard Stoic say, Hiccup glanced over at me. "Not a problem, dad. After all, we've got them." He made a gesture to Shadow, Toothless and I until Astrid cleared her throat. "And them too." He added.

Late that night, Shadow curled up next to me for old times sake. His wing gently placed over me with a grin on his face, I pet him.

"Dragon academy, huh? Sounds exciting, doesn't it?" I said, he nodded and laid his head down next to mine with a purr.

The next morning, we helped Hiccup, Snotlout and the others gather up more than enough fish for the freeze then headed down to our academy to put the logo on it. Sure enough, it was a Night Fury.

"Guys, a little to the left." I said, making a gesture with my hand, they moved right. "No, my left, your right. No, guys. It's still my left. Go to your right, it's my left. Okay. Okay, there. Perfect." I said and turned to Hiccup and Astrid.

"Berk dragon academy." I grinned then pet Shadow's head. "This is gonna be fun."

#### 4. Viking for Hire Pt 1

\*\*Okay, I can't help but to give a big thanks to BloodBendingDancer. Amazing reviewer and follower. \*\*

\*\*Alyssa: Yeah, Shadow and I really appreciate it!\*\*

\*\*Shadow: \*nods with a grin\*\*\*

\*\*Alyssa: See? Oh, others that are grateful are Hiccup, Toothless, Astrid, Snotlout surprisingly-\*\*

\*\*Me: \*\*\*\*\_Very\_\*\*\*\* surprisingly.\*\*

\*\*Alyssa: Anyway, we're all very grateful.\*\*

\*\*Me: \*cracks a grin\* Mm-hmm, especially myself. Now, let's get onto the story.\*\*

"Sorry, I'm late." I walked into the academy with Shadow by my side. "Shadow and I went fishing and we noticed that there was an eel in the net. Those things sure are slippery." Shadow shuddered at the thought of the eel that slid out of my hands and fell onto his face.

"So, Hic, where were you?" I asked, walking up to him.

"Well, I was just about to ask everyone which dragon makes the best welder." He said then looked at the others, "Any answers?"

"Oh, Deadly Nadder." Astrid said. Fishlegs followed it up with his dragon intellegence, "Its magnesium flame burns up to the heat of the sun!"

I nodded, "Correct. Point to Team Astrid." Hiccup said, putting a point for them on the board. "The current score is now 100 to ten." Astrid and Fishlegs laughed, "And you started with ten." She said. "Oh yeah? Well, the games not over." Tuffnut said then wondered out loud, "Wait, what team am I on?"

I threw my head back at the chalkboard behind me, "Okay, Team Snotlout, what is the shot limit of a Hideous Zippleback?" Hiccup asked, Astrid and Fishlegs snickered, "I don't think they can count that high." She said.

"Wanna bet?" Ruffnut challenged, "Barf, Belch!" The Zippleback picked up its heads and fired six times above the heads of the opposing team. "There's no need for that." I said.

"Looks like it's about three." Tuffnut said, holding up two fingers. "Told you we could count that high." Ruffnut grinned. "Actually, it's six. You're half right." Hiccup said, "Five points." "Yes! We're up to thirty!" Ruffnut said with excitement, high-fiving her brother and Snotlout.

"Next question, what happens when you fire at the owner of a Deadly Nadder?" Astrid asked, "Stormfly." Her Nadder got up and tossed a few tail spikes at the opposing team. The spikes pinned them up against the wall.

"No fair, she didn't give us time to answer!" Tuffnut said, dangling from the spikes that held him against the wall.

Snotlout jumped from the wall and walked over to a sleeping Hookfang. "I have a question; what happens when I sick Hookfang on you?" He got on his dragon who set himself aflame when woken up. Snotlout immdediately got off and ran to the water that was laid out for the dragons, sitting in it to cool off.

"What happened there?" I asked, "Hookfang never flares up like that when you're riding him." Hiccup followed it up. Snotlout looked up at Astrid who had just made her way over to us, "You know, Astrid, there's room in here for two." She shoved him under water and I chuckled. "Girl power. Don't mess with it." I said, walking away with Astrid.

"To think that I was concerned." I rolled my eyes, she had nodded. "Tell me about it. I don't know why I even bother."

\* \* \*

><p>"This longsword, ladies and gentlemen, can now be used as a butterknife." Gobber explained to his large crowd.<p>

Ever since we've made peace with our dragons, he's been out of a job but he still makes his weapons. I guess he's trying to sell them as kitchen utensils. Poor Gobber, seriously; he's been pretty much like family to me, seeing him like this pains me.

"Well, this is a dark day." I heard a crotchety, old man's voice through the crowd. "No, no, no." I whispered and pushed through the crowd to see the person that has no business being here talking to Hiccup.

"What are you doing here, Mildew?" I asked, stepping between him and Hiccup. He shook his head, "Not much, just checking in on poor, old Gobber. He's been out of a job thanks to the dragons. I guess this peace wasn't such a good idea after all."

"Get out of here." I said, putting my back to him. "Just go." A loud clanging noise that was followed by the sound of breaking wood caught my attention. I looked over to see that Gobber used Big Bertha to break a hole into someone's home. That displeased most customers and they began to leave.

"No, you haven't even seen the full set yet!" Gobber called, "I've got a whole dungeon full!" I drew back a little bit, seeing the pain and rejection in his eyes. Nothing made me feel worse than that look on his face.

"Poor Gobber." I said out loud before a large, black figure joined my side. "Hey, Shades." I looked over at him, trying to ignore the fact that Mildew was speaking again. Shadow looked at Gobber with confusion then back at me for an answer.

"Gobber's been out of business ever since peace has been made with the dragons." I said, "He's trying to sell all of his stuff but no one's buying it because they think there's no need for it anymore." Shadow put his ears down and looked back at the weaponry.

"What's up?" I asked, he walked over to Gobber boldly and sat in front of him. "Oh, Shadow, right? What can I do you for?" He asked. Shadow waved his tail and looked at the maces and axes. "Don't worry, these things won't hurt you anymore. Besides, if they did, you're rider would take care of them." He added the last part quietly but I still heard it.

"Hey, Gobber." I said, walking over like I hadn't seen anything. "What'cha doing here?" He sighed, "Not much. Just failing in trying to sell... again." I looked at the weapons, "You know, it's been a while since I've got to use a sword. Is this one for sale?" I asked, holding up one of the long swords. "Well, if you have money then yes." He responded. "No problem." I said, patting my pockets. "Uh, sorry, Gobber. I forgot that I was broke." I chuckled nervously, putting the sword down.

"It's fine, lassie. The sword isn't worth much anyway, just like my life now. Just take it." I shook my head, "No, don't talk like that. Just because you're down now doesn't mean you will be later. You need rain to enjoy the sun, right?" After a moment of silence I continued. "What I'm trying to say is; we all go through hard times but they get better. Some people may not think so but I know so. I'm pretty much living proof." Gobber's eyes shifted along the ground, "Okay, lassie. I'll give it another try." I jumped up with excitement, "Now, that's

what I'm talking about! Never give up! The strongest will prevail!" I said and jumped onto Shadow's back, he flew off not a moment later.

"Do you really think it worked?" I asked him, he nodded; he seemed pretty sure about it. I looked over my shoulder, "I sure hope you're right."

A moment of silence had passed between Shadow and I; we just flew with each other for a while, both of us were probably thinking about Gobber. "Gobber taught me what I needed to know so I could make Hiccup's leg." I said randomly, Shadow perked an ear and looked back at me. "He taught Hiccup what he knows, that's kind of how he made Toothless's tail."

Shadow looked at the ground when I mentioned the tail, I forgot that sometimes it's a touchy subject. "Sorry, buddy." I said, furrowing my brows. "I just hate seeing good-old Gobber like that. All sad and everything."

\* \* \*

><p>Sometime the next day, Shadow and I were flying over town and I saw Gobber pounding metal against a wooden ship. "What's he doing?" I asked, "Hey, go see what he's doing." Shadow flew down to Gobber's side as he finished hammering the last nail in.</p>

"Oh, if it isn't little Aly. What can I do you for, lassie? I just finished fixing up this ship." He said then hit the ship with his hammer-hand again and sent it into the water but sadly, it didn't stay above water, it hit the water and sunk.

"Well, that's another thing to add to the list. 'Recover sunken ship'." He wrote it down and I got off of Shadow to step up to him, "Gobber, what are you doing?" He looked up at me from his list, "Oh, Stoic gave a list of things to do. He's made me his right-hand man." He said proudly and I thought, Well, all you've got is your right hand.

"So, what chores were given to you?" I asked then heard a voice behind me yell, "Gobber!" Uh-oh, Stoic doesn't sound too happy. I turned to see him and Shadow stepped aside to let him and a few angry villagers to get past.

"What are you doing?" He asked with frustration.

"Oh, I just had to add something to the list. The ship that I repaired was unstable and sunk to the bottom of the ocean." He replied.

"Okay, so what exactly happened with everyone?" I asked, kind of dreading the answer.

\* \* \*

><p>Back at the Haddock house, I decided to help around the house because Stoic made it obvious that he was frustrated with todays events and pressed two ice blocks to either side of his head.</p>

Hiccup appeared just in time, "Wow, a two block headache?"

"Hiccup, the day was uneventful." I informed and his head tilted, "How so?" I shook my head, saving Stoic from speaking. "Well, Gobber named a baby girl Magnus. Neither of us said that she didn't look like a Magnus but just try telling her parents that. Not to mention that he tried using a mace for a teething toy." Hiccup's eyes widened to the max, almost looking like they'd fall out of his head.

"Don't worry, she wasn't hurt." I informed. "And Gobber tried to fix a wooden ship by replacing it with metal. Then there was a domestic dispute between Mulch and Bucket, he gave them clubs to settle it." Hiccup's eyebrows remained raised as I kept talking.

"It was... pretty hectic." I said. "Who's idea was that anyway?" Hiccup drew his head into his shoulders. My eyes drooped, "You're kidding, right?" He shook his head, "No, Al. Here's what happened..."

\* \* \*

><p><em>Stoic sat in his chair, trying to get some rest after all of the chores that the chief is in charge up. It was a very hectic day for him and after explaining his day to Hiccup, he muttered, "Sometimes I wish there were two of me." </em>

\_ Hiccup's eyes widened and the wood he was placing into the fireplace fell. He grinned as he turned towards his father, "There \_\_\*\*are\*\*\_\_ two of you, dad." He said with excitement.\_

\_ "Is that another crack about my weight?" Stoic asked a little offended.\_

\_ "No, I mean Gobber." He explained. \_

\* \* \*

><p>"Hiccup." I shook my head, "Why would- nevermind. I probably would've done the same."</p>

"You would've done worse." Stoic muttered. My eyes narrowed slightly as I didn't look back at him, "Yeah, I would've." I said with slight offense and looking at the ground. Hiccup patted my shoulder, "You know he doesn't mean it. It's the headache talking." I rolled my eyes.

"And how did it work out just before he went out? How'd he respond?" I asked Stoic who removed one of his ice blocks. "He first thought that I wanted him to club people first and ask questions later." He responded, my shoulders drooped.

"So, what are you gonna do about him?" I asked Stoic who put both blocks of ice down. "I'm not going to do anything. You two however," I cocked an eyebrow, "Please tell me he's not gonna-" I began but Hiccup cut me off, "He is."

\* \* \*

><p>"You're bringing Gobber <em>here</em>?" Fishlegs asked. I nodded, "Sure." "Well, guys, he's out of a job. Why not let him help us with

the dragon academy?" "I can think of a few good reasons." I muttered but Hiccup kicked my shin... with his metal leg.

"Ow!" I pulled my leg up and glared, "I wasn't gonna name them!" "Gods, Al. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to kick you \_that\_ hard." He apologized and I rubbed my hurt leg. "You shouldn't kick me with that leg \_at all\_!"

Then the door to the academy opened and Gobber entered, dragging a cart full of dragon-killing weapons. Shadow's eyes narrowed but I shook my head, he obeyed and sat back down. Wow, I know why he got so upset. These things reek of blood.

"Um, Gobber? Why'd you bring your..." Hiccup trailed off then Gobber finished for him. "What? Killing things?" I nodded, "I'm sure we don't need those."

"You kids don't understand; we teach them by threatening to kill them. That's how my daddy taught me how to swim." He said and that was all the more disturbing. "Gobber, do you need to talk to somebody?" I asked sympathetically. His head shook, "No, let's get started shall we?" He took one of his large maces and slammed it into the ground, "School's in session!" Everyone's dragons, excluding Shadow and Toothless, panicked and ran out of the academy then flew off. Their riders followed to go and get them. "Yeah, I never really liked school much either." Gobber grinned. I looked down at Shadow, "This is gonna be a long day."

## 5. Viking for Hire Pt 2

"Gobber, do you think that instead of trying to teach the dragons you could make some saddles for them?" I asked. "I know that you're really into making new things with different designs so Hiccup and I discussed that maybe making saddles would be better and more suited for you."

Darn Hiccup sent me off to do his dirty work. Right now, I'm talking to Gobber about making saddles for the dragons since Astrid and the twins had came back with aching bottoms. The twins had it so bad that they were literally kicking each other's butts just to get back the feeling in them.

"Saddles?" He asked, I nodded. "Yeah, Hiccup even made some designs that he was hoping you could follow." I tried to show him the paper then he took the paper and tossed it. "Well, that's nice." I drooped my shoulders.

"Just take it easy, Gobber." I informed and he scoffed. "Oh, please. I've been making saddles since you were in diapers, in fact, I made your diapers." I nodded, "I know. I recall the spikes." Then I shook my head a little, "Gobber, just hear me out; take it easy. For me?"

"Listen, lassie, I may have taught you everything that you and Hiccup know but I haven't taught you two everything \_I\_ know." He said, tapping me with his hammer-hand rather roughly. I nodded, internally hoping that he'd understand and listen to me. "Fine. I want you to know that I'm trusting you with this. So, have fun and good luck." I walked away with a little less weight on my shoulders then when I

went in.

Hiccup happened to pass by with Toothless by his side, "What'd he say?" He asked and I looked around, "He said that he'd make them." Hiccup nodded, "Well, it's Gobber. They can't be that bad, can they?" He asked then Shadow flew over his head to nuzzle me.

"Were you nice to poor, old Hiccup?" I asked and the two both nodded. "Good. Can't have you causing trouble all around Berk again, can we?" Shadow purred at me while brushing against me again.

The events that occurred a while back with Mildew had shaken him up for a while. He's been waking up scared and out of breath, in his sleep he's been struggling like he's being tied up and taken away. I wake him up most of the time and he snaps his jaws at me until he realizes that it's only me then he'll cuddle up to me. Sometimes I'll hum or sing to him to calm him down, he looks at me a little shocked when he first heard me sing then looks quite pleased.

Anyway, going back to Hiccup and I; it was early in the night when we hung around outside of the blacksmith, hearing Gobber sing away as he worked on the saddles.

"\_Well, I've got my axe and I've got my mace\_

\_And I love my wife with the ugly face\_

\_I'm a Viking through and through\_."

"He only sings that song when he's really happy." Hiccup pointed out and I nodded, "I know. I've been with him as long as you have." Hiccup's eyes rolled, "I know that. I think we did a good thing for him. Don't you think, Al?" He asked and I nodded, "Sure thing. Anyway, it's getting late and there's another big day ahead of us tomorrow." Hiccup nodded at me, "Yep. All right. Night, Al. Sweet dreams." "Good night, Hic. Sweet dreams."

\* \* \*

><p>I wish that I could say that the next day was better but sadly, it wasn't.</p>

Gobber came into the arena with his new saddles that he made for the dragons. He named off the other animals that he's made saddles for and the ones for the dragons were supposed to be his best. And if I know Gobber, which I do, that would mean that the saddles would turn out super off the wall. Guess what? They were.

The one for Meatlug had four extra large maces hanging off of each corner, weighing her down. Hookfang's had a flamethrower, Stormfly's had a large and loud horn, the twins got catapults. Our reactions to the saddles all varied. Here's how it went.

"I've made many saddles before." Gobber began to explain to us. "Horse, donkey and now; dragon. These saddles are different, though. They're like my children; that is, if you strapped your child to a flaming reptile and rode it."

I laughed at that. Oh, Odin. Gobber's sense of humor makes me crack up!

Gobber lifted the cloth off of the saddles for the dragons, displaying his over-the-top 'creativity'. I made my way over to Hiccup, "This wasn't what you had in mind, was it?" I asked and he sighed, "Let's go talk to him."

"Gobber, these aren't my designs." Hiccup said. "No duh." I rolled my eyes and once again, got myself hit by that metal leg. I bit my lip and kicked Hiccup back but I forgot about that darn leg and hurt myself further, "Ow!" I whispered and saw Hiccup try not to laugh at my stupidity and keep the conversation between him and Gobber serious.

Astrid made her way over to us as well, "Is that a—" She was about to ask, looking at Hookfang's saddle. "Flamethrower? Indeed it is." He squeezed it a little and flame came out and all three of us backed away from the heat that emitted from the flamethrower. "Didn't expect that one coming, did ya?" I nodded and got kicked by both Hiccup and Astrid. "Ow!"

"Al, go over there and let the adults talk." Hiccup pointed to the other side of the academy, I pouted. "Shut up." Hiccup looked back at Gobber, "But no, Gobber none of us saw that coming." He emphasized for me, looking at me through the corner of his eye.

"Right." I rubbed my leg that seems to be a foot magnet. "Especially since dragons come with a flamethrower built in." Gobber's face was still beaming, "I know but can you ever really have too much firepower?" "No." I answered.

The twins were flying on their new saddles then tried out their catapults that hit Barf and Belch in the back of the head, almost knocking them out cold.

"Catapults for the twins?" Hiccup asked, "Yeah, that's totally safe." I said with sarcasm. Hiccup shook his head, "She's right. It isn't such a good idea."

Snotlout tried to get his saddle situated on Hookfang but the Nightmare practically threw him off and growled. He kept rubbing the left side of his face against the ground ever since he's gotten moody; what's up with that?

"Come on, Hookfang. What's wrong?" He asked and reached to touch Hookfang's snout but he growled and moodily curled up in a ball. "That's it! Someone's trading with me." Snotlout ordered and the twins smirked.

"Yeah, I'll trade my perfect dragon for an angry oven." Tuffnut commented.

"I'll go have a look-see." I said and walked over to the moody Nightmare. "Hookfang, how are you, boy?" I asked and he huffed with smoke blowing out of his nose.

"So, not good?" I asked curiously and he curled up tighter then pulled back, licking the inside of his mouth and wincing occasionally. What's up with his mouth?

"Hey, Snotlout, is anything wrong with Hookfang's mouth?" I asked and

he took a few steps over to where I was standing. "I don't know. He's just been so pig-headed lately."

An eyebrow rose on my face as I looked back at the moody dragon.  
"Well, he's licking the inside of his mouth and keeps rubbing his jaw against the ground."

"What do you think's wrong?" He asked and I shrugged a shoulder, "I'm trying to think and not much is coming to mind."

The loud blowing of a horn gave me a good shock and then an even bigger one once the sound deepened, I saw Stormfly throw her tail into the air and I ducked, spikes from her tail almost grazing over my head and I looked up to see Snotlout pinned to the wall by her spikes.

"Really? Again?" He asked.

I would have chuckled if it wasn't for poor, old Hookfang here. I knelt down to him and reached for his snout, his breathing got slightly heavier and I pulled my hand back. I examined up and down the left side of his face but didn't see anything. What was the problem?

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup snapped his fingers to get Toothless' attention, once caught he made a gesture for Toothless to go to the other side of the academy, which he did.</p>

He and I were cleaning up Gobber's mess. Burn marks from an angry Nightmare, piles of crumbled rocks that were broken with the twins catapults, a bunch of ash from the flames of all of the dragons, and a few stray Nadder spikes.

"My Odin, this place looked better when we were killing dragons." Stoic pronounced as he came in to see the disaster of what came from Gobber's saddles and whatever was up with Hookfang.

"We sort of got Gobbered." Hiccup said, still sweeping up some ash from the stone floor.

"Well, you know Gobber. He means well." Stoic said.

"We know." I said as I picked up the last of Stormfly's spikes that impaled the ground.

"What do you plan on doing with him?" He asked as he turned to Hiccup.

I looked up from the spikes that I was about to carry out and stopped to listen to the conversation.

"I'm gonna clean this mess up and redesign his work." Hiccup said.

"Listen, Hiccup; Gobber's like family."

"I know, that's why I can't say anything to him."

"No, son. That's why you have to." He placed a comforting hand on Hiccup's shoulder.

Hiccup got a bit frustrated with his father at this point. "Why do I have to be the one to say something to him? You didn't." He broke away from his father's hand.

"That's what the cheif does. He delegates." Stoic said.

"Fine. I'll... say something to him tonight." Hiccup finally said after a breif moment of thought.

Stoic placed an arm around Hiccup and began to walk out of the academy with Toothless and Shadow but saw Snotlout still stuck up on the wall. He was fast asleep.

"What about him?" Stoic asked.

"Leave him. He's going for a new record." Hiccup said as they passed by him and walked in front of me.

I watched Hiccup and Stoic walk away and I pretty much knew that I'd have to be the one to get Snotlout down. I sighed and walked over to him, "Hey, Snotlout." I said and got no response. "Snotlout." I said a little bit louder.

I looked at Shadow and made a head-gesture for him to wake him up. Shadow examined him closely then simply pushed him off of the wall and let him fall to the ground, which woke him up instantly.

"Wha- where am I?" He asked and sat up hurriedly.

"The academy. You fell asleep on Stormfly's spikes." I said and pulled them out of the wall. "Hookfang left a while ago. He's lying around in the plaza."

"Pig-headed dragon. And did I ask you where he was? Idiot." He rolled his eyes and began to walk off.

"Well, you're freaking welcome." I said, using most of my energy trying to not throw Stormfly's spikes at him. Shadow growled at him until I shook my head, "It's not worth it." I said and began to walk off with Shadow at my side.

"Shades, let's just hope that Gobber isn't too hurt by being out of a job... again." I added quietly and Shadow nodded quite sad himself. In my mind, I was trying not to picture Gobber hurt again.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup and I were hanging out around outside of the blacksmith again and were waiting for the right time to go in and break the news to him. Even though we'd been standing there for a while and silently hoping that he'd somehow do better.</p>

"Who knows, Al? Maybe Gobber actually looked at my designs and is making them better." He said with hope and as if on queue, an explosion came from the blacksmith.

"Maybe now's the time." I said and looked almost gravely at my dear

friend. He sighed, "Well, let's get this over with."

We entered the blacksmith and a crossbow was immediately pointed at us. "Son of a bridge troll!" I said, putting my hands up. "Don't shoot!" Hiccup followed it up, doing the same.

"I would never shoot either of you two unless I absolutely have to." Gobber said, not lowering the crossbow.

"Well, I'm sure that me and Al both would feel a lot more comfortable if you put the crossbow away." He said, lowering his hands. I began to slump down, relaxing myself.

Gobber placed his crossbow down and went back to working on the saddles again. I looked at Hiccup, wondering which of us should be the one to break the silence. Hiccup noticed me looking and shifted his eyes along the ground then stepped up.

"Uh, Gobber? I was kind of thinking that you should take a break." He said hesitantly.

"A break? I don't know if you know this but the only time a Viking takes a break is when he's dead." He responded.

"Okay, new choice of words." Hiccup began again, "Gobber, I'm not sure if this is working out." Gobber stopped working for a bit then spoke again, "Well, come back to me when you're sure."

Hiccup shifted his gaze back to me then at Gobber again. "Okay, we're sure that this isn't working out." Gobber stopped working again, this time putting down his hammer. "Are you two getting rid of me?" He asked. I looked towards the ground.

"I'm sorry, Gobber." Hiccup apologized, I looked back up guiltily and he added "We're both very sorry." I didn't know what else to say other than "It's true. We truly are sorry."

"I don't need your pity." Gobber said, "I've lost an arm and a leg, I think I can survive losing a job." I looked at the ground again then walked up to put a hand on his shoulder, "I'm sorry, Gobber." I apologized then began to walk away.

Hiccup was following with Toothless next to him just as I had Shadow next to me, "That was terrible." He said, "What could possibly be worse?"

Then fire burst through the sky with a dragon's roar and a few Vikings screaming in terror. "Let's find out." I said and saw a very angry Hookfang turn the corner with Snotlout running towards us.

He was out of breath and held Hiccup's shoulder, "Guys, I never thought I'd say this but... help!"

"How'd this happen?" I asked, looking at Hookfang storm about and breath fire in countless directions.

"I was just petting his head. He usually loves that!" He said with fear and alarm. I looked over Hookfang again and again but still, nothing was visible to me.

Hookfang was soon enough in front of us and rubbing the left side of his head against the ground again. There's seriously something wrong with the left side of his face if he keeps acting out about it.

"They say that a pet usually takes on the characteristics of its owner. I think that's what's going on here." Fishlegs said, earning an elbow from Snotlout right to the gut. "I rest my case."

"No, it's more than that." I said but I don't think I was heard.

"When's the last time he ate?" Hiccup asked, stepping up to Hookfang and a basket full of fish next to him.

"Not for days." Snotlout responded.

Okay, so Hookfang's not eating, he's rubbing the left side of his face against the ground, he keeps having fits each time that the left side of his face is touched, he's being moody. I've seen this before but where? Where?

"You hungry, boy?" Hiccup asked, holding a fish out to Hookfang. He sniffed it and Hiccup threw the fish to him, he chewed for a bit then made a shocked and pained face then spit it out right into Stoic's beard.

"Ohh," Hiccup groaned, "Sorry, dad."

"We've got to get this dragon under control." Stoic said, taking the fish out of his beard and throwing it back, Toothless catching and eating it.

"Don't worry, I can do this." Hiccup said and held a hand out to Hookfang's snout. "It's going to be okay." He patted the left side of Hookfang's face and that threw the Nightmare into another fit.

He pulled back away from Hiccup and breathed fire into the air, setting himself on fire as well. "Hiccup, run!" Astrid called, "Way ahead of you!" Hiccup called back and took off around the dragon. Toothless rushed to Hiccup's rescue, tackling Hookfang to the ground then leaping off. The two circled each other and Shadow stiffened, he looked like he was debating whether or not to jump in and help.

Toothless screeched at Hookfang softly and he blew fire just over Toothless, "Toothless!" Hiccup called. The fire hit one of the buildings in the back and set it on fire. "Stop!" He yelled and put his hands on Toothless' head.

"I've seen enough, son." Stoic placed an arm on Hiccup's shoulder. "I'm sorry. We tried it your way." He left and went into the blacksmith. Gods, no.

We watched as Toothless and Hookfang kept growling at each other for a bit, wondering what we should do.

"Come on, guys. Hurry up. What haven't we tried?" Hiccup asked. I shrugged with eyes widening a little then Hiccup turned to Snotlout who turned around, "Snotlout, you have an idea?" Then he said with

slight fear, "Gobber." I looked back to see Gobber holding a few of his many weapons then remembered where I saw this before.

"Horse!" I said, making the twins look at me. "Huh?" They asked in unison.

"I saw this before with a horse. Th-there was something up with a tooth and the reins on the horse were pulled against its sore teeth and the horse went into a fit. I've got to tell Stoic and Gobber." I said and hurriedly stepped away from them.

"What'd she say?" Tuffnut asked.

"I don't know." Ruffnut responded with a shrug then placing her hands on her hips.

"Gobber, Stoic; listen to me, this is more harmless than it seems." I said, Stoic looked down at me. "Harmless? How many homes have been destroyed?" He asked. "I don't know but if you hear me out—" He cut in and interrupted me, "We've already tried it your way. It didn't work."

"Dad, you can't be serious. Hookfang is Snotlout's dragon." Hiccup pleaded to his father, now in front of him.

"Listen, I'm sorry you two but sometimes you have to fall back on the old ways." Gobber said gravely.

"If you'd just listen—" I began but was cut off again.

"Listen, he's a good dragon." Hiccup said softly.

"He's a good dragon!" Snotlout said rather desperately, can't say I blame him.

"Can I please speak?" I asked but was ignored.

"There's probably just something wrong with him." Hiccup said.

"There's definitely something wrong with him." Snotlout pleaded.

"Yeah, and it's—" Once again, cut off. I was getting a little angry by now.

"We have to try and help him. We can't just get rid of him because he's having a bad day." Hiccup pleaded.

"He isn't having a bad day, he has a bad—" Okay, one more interuption and I'm yelling over them.

"A bad day for a dragon could be a disaster for all of us. That's not a risk I'm willing to take." Stoic said. "Gobber."

Gobber stepped up and threw restrains at Hookfang, catching his wings and hind legs. "Ha, you're all out of fire." He said. I took off towards Gobber as he pulled a long sword from its sheath. I caught his arm, "Listen to me, I've seen this before. It's just a—"

"I can't let you do this." Hiccup said.

Once again, cut off. These people are going to hear me out whether they want to or not. "If someone would just take ten seconds to listen to me then maybe you'd figure out by now that it is just a-!"

Hookfang broke from his restraints by setting himself on fire and burning the ropes that constricted him. He came over and roared at us, mouth wide open.

"Tooth." I said very quietly, I doubt anyone other than Gobber or Hiccup heard me. I was much more calm now, knowing that they'd seen the tooth. "You should have said something sooner." Gobber said and Hiccup nodded, "Yeah, we could have already crossed this bridge."

My face grew red, "I tried but does anyone ever listen to me? \_No.\_" I folded my arms, containing most of my anger then stepping back a few feet. "Now, do your thing." I said.

"Time to put this beast out of its misery." Gobber rolled his shoulders and stepped up to Hookfang. "You guys! What are you doing?" Astrid stepped up to stop what was happening but Hiccup but a hand up and silenced her.

Gobber leapt at Hookfang and began to yank at the inside of his mouth. I leaned against a nearby house and watched the rest of it happen. Hookfang finally tossed Gobber off and shook his head, going back to the normal, old Hookfang that we know and love.

"You didn't kill him!" Snotlout gasped happily.

"For a toothache? What kind of lunatic are you?" Gobber asked as he showed off the tooth that he'd pulled from Hookfang's mouth.

"Thanks, Al." Hiccup said. "Sorry that we didn't listen earlier." I shook my head, "It's fine." I didn't want any credit for anything. I was just glad that Hookfang was okay.

Speaking of Hookfang, he ran over to Snotlout and happily nudged at his stomach then lifted him up on his snout and making him laugh then whisper, "Stop it, stop it." He cleared his throat. "I don't know where that came from. Can you train that out of them or-?" Most everyone began to make their way to get away from him and Hookfang looked like he was getting really tired of that walked away.

I smirked at him. He noticed me looking then defensively asked "What?" I chuckled, "You want to be tough so badly. It's okay to be concerned for your dragon." He rolled his eyes, "Whatever, I'm out of here." He stormed off like a child. So overdramatic.

"Hey, Hookfang." I said to the Nightmare, catching his attention. He stepped up to me and lowered his head to my level. "You okay now?" I asked, he purred and I stroked his nose. "I'll take that as a yes. It would have been over earlier if I'd only remembered the symptoms of a sore tooth."

Shadow stepped up to Hookfang and gave a soft warble. Hookfang looked over at him and tilted his head, Shadow stood on his back legs then

bowed his head respectfully to him. Hookfang returned the bow and nudged him slightly with his nose. Shadow stood next to me and trilled softly.

"Hookfang! Come on, let's go!" Snotlout called. Hookfang rolled his eyes but began to walk off to his owner. "See ya later, Hookfang." I said and walked off with Shadow. "It's probably time to hit the hay." Shadow tilted his head at the expression. "Go to sleep." I explained then he nodded, now understanding.

\* \* \*

><p>"Hey, Al." Hiccup's voice called for me as he knocked on the front door. "I have to ask you something." I stumbled around for a moment before getting to the door. "Hey, Hic." I yawned. "What is it?"</p>

"Does Shadow need to see a dentist so we don't have anymore Hookfang incidents?" He asked and I looked over at Shadow, he exposed his teeth and closed his mouth. "Do you?" I asked, he nodded. "Okay, let's go see our dragon dentist. So, who is it, anyway?"

"You'll see." He replied. He led me through the village for a bit before taking Shadow and I to the blacksmith. The dragons and their riders were there with them. "So, Gobber's finally got a new job?" I asked with a growing grin on my face. He nodded, "Yep. I'm pretty sure that this one will be better than the last." He chuckled as did I.

Thank goodness. Gobber's a good man and deserves the best. As far as I'm concerned, he'll surely pull in plenty of money with this dentistry business.

## 6. Animal House

Most of the other teens and I sat with our dragons and listened to one of Hiccup and Astrid's most recent stories. Apparently, they were sled racing with and on their dragons. Something happened that had caused an avalanche and they had gotten caved in under a bunch of snow.

"The dragons had their wings over us, protecting us from the snow!" Hiccup said excitedly. Everyone was listening intently to the story, Fishlegs and I more so than the others. "It was like their protective instincts just kicked in!" Astrid said.

"Wow." I grinned at Toothless and Stormfly. "That's amazing."

"I've never heard of a dragon doing that before." Fishlegs said in awe. "You know, you guys could have used each other's bodies to keep warm." The two glanced at each other then scooted away with embarrassment.

"Who would do that?" Hiccup asked as he looked at the ground. I snickered then his eyes flew up to meet mine with a slightly irritated scowl so I bit my lip to keep from laughing any further.

"Hey, Astrid, if you're still cold..." Snotlout trailed off with open

arms and making a kissy face. I rolled my eyes and stomped on his foot, Astrid elbowed the post next to her that dropped a bunch of snow on Snotlout, only a bit coming off onto Fishlegs and I.

"Better." I said then the twins had called up to us.

"Oh, Hiccup." Tuffnut sang.

"Al." Ruffnut called.

"Hey, what's up?" I asked as I looked down at them and shook the snow off of myself.

"Stoic's looking for you two." Tuffnut answered. "He looked angry." Ruffnut smirked. Hiccup stood up with a quiet sigh, "He's looked angry since the day I was born... but I doubt that has anything to do with this." He got on Toothless and I got on Shadow, "Let's go, Al."

\* \* \*

><p>We'd flown over to the Haddock house and then there was this whole conversation about the animals not being used to the dragons presence without running around to save their tail. According to Stoic, Mulch and Bucket; whenever Bucket's bucket tightens up, it means a storm is coming and so we have to get all of the animals to start producing again or else we might not make it through the freeze.</p>

"Dad, we're in winter. Devastating winter isn't for another three months." Hiccup tried to reason.

"Hey, wasn't the bucket tighter when there was that really heavy storm and Mildew got lost and buried in?" I asked and Mulch nodded. "Yeah, we regret that we didn't leave him there." He said and I folded my arms, "No kidding."

"Anyway, so we have to try and get the animals adjusted to the dragons presence if I'm not mistaken?" I asked and Stoic nodded. "How much time do we have?" Hiccup asked. "About a week." Mulch responded over Bucket's groaning.

"A week? Well, that's plenty of time." He said then Bucket groaned louder. "Scratch that, three days." Mulch corrected his own calculations. "Okay, less time might be more of a problem." Hiccup sighed.

\* \* \*

><p>"So, how do you think we should get the animals adjusted to the dragons?" I asked as we stuck around in the academy with the other teens and plenty of the barn animals. The animals were petrified by the dragons presence once again and looked like they'd run at any moment, that's why we had the gates shut so the only animals that might get out would be a few chickens.</p>

"I don't know." Hiccup responded. "Any suggestions?"

"How about we look at this through an animal's point of view?"

Fishlegs asked and got on all fours then began to walk around the dragons while bleating like a sheep. "Hello, Mr. Dragon. Don't mind me, I'm just a little sheep." He bleated again. "You know, he isn't so scary." Sadly, Fishlegs had spoken too soon and the Nightmare roared at him, he scurried over to Meatlug and hid under her, she stood over him protectively. "I'm sorry but I'm siding with the sheep on this one." He said fearfully.

"That could have gone better." I said with a sigh.

"Let's try and introduce them." Hiccup said and I cocked my brows, "Really? Introductions?" I asked. "Fine, let's introduce some animals."

Astrid and Hiccup were trying to lead a yak over to the dragons. "Come on, I know the dragons look scary but they're only big, scaly reptiles." She tried to reason.

"Just like Snotlout." Tuffnut snickered. Snotlout lifted him by the shirt collar and readied a fist but took a moment of consideration. "You're the guy, right?" He asked and Tuffnut turned his head away and made his voice high-pitched. "No."

I rolled my eyes, "Not the time for this." I pet one of the sheep. "Come on, let's go." The sheep dug its hooves into the ground and I began to push it, hooves scraping the ground. "Okay, Shadow. Come here, quietly and slowly."

Shadow perked his ears up from the side of the academy and walked slowly over to the sheep, he looked pretty focused. The only problem was that he looked too focused, his eyes began to narrow and he looked like he was stalking prey.

The sheep panicked and ran off, bleating wildly. Shadow looked up at me as if he'd done something wrong. "Shadow, don't look so... focused when working with these animals, okay? They're pretty jumpy so let's try again."

After that, it didn't take too long for all of the animals to go a-wall and begin to bounce off the walls in fear of the dragons. Shadow decided that he'd had enough and curled up in a ball on the lesser populated side of the academy, getting trampled only twice by a bunch of chickens.

"I've got an idea. I think that I know better than anyone that once you see that something has a fear of its own, it makes it less scary." Astrid suggested. "Remember Magnus the Merciless? I used to be afraid of him until I found out that he was afraid of the dark."

"So during the day; Mercilous." Tuffnut said.

"And at night; Tuffnut." Ruffnut teased and Tuffnut turned towards her with anger and embarrassment, "Hey! That's a real problem."

"Magnus used to be my neighbor." I said randomly. "He'd chatter to himself with fear throughout the night and you could hear it from my house. One time I know for a fact that I heard 'The Terrors are gonna get me.'" The teens had snickered at that. "He moved away after a

while because of my father's confounded yelling."

"Anyway, back to business." Hiccup said, getting our attention back. We all looked towards him as he held a couple of eels up to the Nadder and Nightmare. They backed away, growling and screeching at the eels. The yaks looked at each other questioningly with confused moos.

"I think it's working." Fishlegs said.

Then an eel slipped out of Hiccup's hand and it slithered its way towards the dragons. They began to run amok through the academy, frightening the animals to where they did the same. I ran over to the slithering eel and picked it up, the slimy thing wriggling immensely. I hurried over to the basket and tossed it back in then had to rush and calm down the animals but more importantly, the dragons.

The Nightmare fired a wild shot that hit one of the sheep. Hiccup ran over and patted the flame out. I ran to the Nadder and began to pat its nose, "Calm down, buddy. It's okay, the eel's gone now." The Nadder shuddered at the mention of eels but slowly began to level down its tail spikes as it took deep breaths.

"See? No more eels. You're fine." I began to walk back and lead the dragon to one side of the academy. "Stay here, okay? We'll have everything under control in a bit."

Astrid led the Nightmare back towards the Nadder by pushing gently on its nose. Hiccup was holding a couple of chickens, "You wanna know what I've learned from this? Chickens are very, well; chicken." He grinned, trying to shed a little light.

"What if we show them how much they have in common with the dragons?" Fishlegs asked. Astrid and Hiccup looked at him with confusion. "Well, they do both lay eggs." I pointed out.

"Yeah, a Terrible Terror layed one last week." He conveniently pulled the egg out and set it down in front of the chickens. "You were just... carrying that around?" I asked. He put his hands behind his back, "That isn't the issue right now."

The chickens walked over to the egg; one sat on it and the others huddled up next to it. "All right, see?" Hiccup asked the chickens. "An egg's an egg, right, ladies?" A thought suddenly came to mind, "Hiccup, what about when the egg—" The egg cracked, revealing red on the inside of the egg then the egg exploded with the chickens all around it, luckily; they were unhurt.

"Explodes?" Hiccup asked and I nodded. "We should think our plans through better." I said.

"Everybody out; the storm is here!" Gobber said and just then snow began to fall. Shadow stretched out then rushed to my side, keeping a close eye on the falling snow. "I thought we had three days." I said. "Turns out not. Let's go!" Gobber said.

"Wait! We haven't made any progress with the animals!" Hiccup said. Gobber pulled a chicken out of one of the cages. "Your father wants everyone in the great hall." "Take the others. I need to stay and keep working with the animals. They're still afraid." Hiccup

said.

"You can't get eggs from a frozen chicken. We have to get these animals in the barn."

\* \* \*

><p>"So much for the barn." Gobber said. The barn was pretty much done for, no one would be able to get in or out.</p>

"Any one else have an idea?" I asked.

"There's no other place to hold 'em!" Mulch said over the wind.

"The great hall!" Hiccup suggested.

"So we're going to have the dragons and the animals under the same roof? We know that won't work." Mulch said.

"We have no choice." Hiccup said. "Let's go."

Trudging through the snow, we kept close eyes on all of the animals. With all of the wind and snow, we could easily lose one of them. Then just our luck; thunder hit a tree and it fell over in front of Stormfly, she whipped her tail around and smacked Hookfang across his muzzle. In self defense, he set himself ablaze then fired randomly into the snow, frightening the animals and making them run off in fear.

A lamb ran in front of me and I leapt for it but missed, face-planting into the snow. I pushed myself up and looked back up at the running animals. Shadow came over to my side and pushed me up out of the snow.

"Thanks, Shades." I got on his back, "Well, time to herd us some animals."

"Where are you going?" Gobber asked. I looked back and saw Hiccup getting on Toothless. As expected. I shook my head, "Let's go get 'em." I said.

Shadow took off into the sky, "Not you, too!" Gobber said over the wind. I shook it off and kept Shadow flying after these easily lost animals.

"So easy to lose, so hard to find." I muttered. Shadow sniffed through the air, trying to catch the scent of the animals. "Find as many as you can!" Hiccup said over the harsh winds. "We'll herd them back to the great hall."

Fishlegs rose a shaky hand up from Meatlug, "Can we swing by my house first? I'd like to pick up my heavy coat."

"Check this out." Tuffnut said then slapped himself. "I'm so cold I can't feel my face." Ruffnut slapped him, "Didn't feel it!" He teased. "That takes all the fun out of it!" She responded.

"I'm glad that I brought my cloak today." I said, the long cloak that once belonged to my mother whipping behind me. The only problem with my cloak is that it's long, too long. It comes down to my calves and

it could easily get caught on a branch. Either way, I don't mind; the cloak belonged to my mother and is a treasure to me.

All right, anyway, we flew over an open area near a cliff; seeing small, scattered groups of animals. "There they are." I said, alerting the others. "Come on!" Hiccup said.

We flew towards the animals that freaked out when they saw us. Shadow looked for a group that didn't already have a dragon chasing after them, he decided on a few sheep that somehow managed to evade each dragon. I looked up and saw a yak that had tripped and began to slide through the snow. "Shadow, get the yak." I said, he looked up and bolted towards the yak.

The yak fell over the side and Shadow swooped, gripping the yak around the upper-back. The flight pattern had changed and we got weighed down a bit, that's how I knew that we caught the yak without even looking. "Okay, back up." I said, Shadow pulled the yak back up towards the other yaks and Hiccup and Toothless had just done the same with a sheep. One of the sheep that Shadow was going to help herd.

"A yak?" He asked, "Seriously?" "We have bigger problems than one yak, Hiccup." I said. "The storm's getting worse. I can't see anything!" Astrid said. "I've got this." Hiccup said then fired behind him, two large figures were seen from the light of the fire.

"Stray yaks, twelve o' clock!" Hiccup called.

"I see them!" Tuffnut yelled. "And they are huge!" They flew off and came back, dropping off Stoic and Gobber. "I've been wrong before." Hiccup said quietly.

We all landed our dragons and got off, walking over to Stoic and Gobber. "Do I look like a yak to you?" I heard Gobber shout as he stood on all fours next to a yak. I chuckled, "You'd be surprised." The yak walked away from him.

"You all shouldn't be out here." Stoic said.

"I'm sorry I let you down, dad."

"It's not your fault, son. Let's go back."

"Which way?" Gobber cut in.

"We follow our tracks." Stoic gestured behind him, we saw nothing. "So much for that idea." Gobber said.

"Sir, what do we do now?" Fishlegs asked. Most of the teens were shuddering, I took off my cloak and handed it to Hiccup and Astrid, "Here. Cover yourselves up." I placed it over their shoulders and since it's my mother's old but good 'Viking-sized' cloak, it covered them both nicely.

I don't normally hand my cloak out to just anyone but these two are the most important to me out of all of the teens. I have a somewhat friendly and kind bond with Fishlegs but it's nothing compared to how I am with these two.

"Everybody, come together." Stoic said. No one wasted any time in huddling together, holding onto themselves. I leaned up against Hiccup and Astrid and held myself tightly.

I looked over at Shadow and his ears stood up, I made a head gesture for him to come over. He looked over at Toothless, Toothless nodded then began to make growling noises to the other dragons. I furrowed my brows at what was going on, the dragons began to gather around us in a circle and spread their wings, connecting them and making a circle around us.

"What are they doing?" Stoic asked.

"They're protecting us." Hiccup answered.

"So, it was like the story that you told us earlier." I said.

"It's their natural instinct." Astrid nodded to me.

We all grinned then the dragons began to breath fire at the ground around them, almost making a complete ring of fire. It began to heat us all up immediately. Toothless looked back at the animals behind him then over at Shadow who was just to his left. Shadow nodded at him and the two took off towards the animals.

Shadow ran towards the yaks and skidded to a stop in front of them, making them run all except for one. Toothless making his way towards the sheep, the others ran excpet for the one he'd saved earlier. The Night Furies looked expectantly at the animals that slowly began to make their way towards the dragons.

Shadow and Toothless both got back in place but each held one wing open as if it was a door. The two animals walked in then the other animals became encouraged to come on in as well. It got a little crowded but it worked out, we were still kept warm by the fire and each other. The sheep laid at Toothless' feet and the yak bowed to Shadow a little, showing him respect then walking towards the other yaks.

"You're dragons are really something." Stoic said.

"Yeah, they are." Hiccup said. Toothless, Stormfly and Shadow fired up into the sky.

The next morning when we had all woken up, the dragons shook the snow off of themselves and put their wings down. We all grinned at each other, not needing words at the moment.

\* \* \*

><p>Carrying and leading all of the animals into the great hall. I carried a sheep over my shoulders next to Astrid with a few yaks and chickens trailing behind us. Shadow had a few chickens resting on his back.</p>

We got into the great hall and let all of the animals down. Then we heard Mulch, "They're back and they're all right." "The animals are all right too." Bucket said.

"Uh-oh, here come the dragons." Mulch said on a more cautious note but was then shocked to see sheep getting off of Hookfang and chickens get off of Shadow. "Will you look at that?" He grinned.

"Hey, everyone!" Astrid called and got everyone's attention, Hiccup held a chicken in one hand and an egg in the other. "The chickens are laying eggs again!" He held the egg up high and the Vikings cheered. Hiccup placed the chicken down then Toothless leapt up to his side.

"Oh, you're cloak." Hiccup said and removed the large cloak from his body and handed it back to me, "Thanks for letting Astrid and I use it." I nodded and placed it over my shoulders but not putting it on. "It's nothing. You should know me by now. I'd do anything for you, Astrid, the dragons of course. You guys are a huge part of my life."

Astrid appeared by my side with a grin, "Well, thank you." I grinned back, "I think life on Berk just got a little warmer." Hiccup said and broke out into a grin as well.

## 7. Treacherous Trio (Terrible Twos) Pt 1

\*\*I think I want to respond to my viewers today. I love you guys!\*\*

\*\*ami: Thanks, you're very sweet!\*\*

\*\*BloodBendingDancer: I'm glad that you're enjoying this so much!\*\*

\*\*Onto the story!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"You have got to be kidding me!" I said, getting back home. It was completely demolished. All of the keepsakes that I had of my mother were gone. All except for the cloak I was wearing. I was teary-eyed but the tears didn't fall, how the heck was my house the only one that was completely torn to the ground?!<p>

By the amount of snow covering it, it was sometime early in the storm. Surprisingly; my house was the oldest on Berk, almost a year now, so that could have been another reason that it was torn down. I don't know, I really don't know.

Shadow brushed his head against my hand. I jumped but looked down at him, he looked apologetically at the remains of my home then back up at me. I sighed sadly, "It's no big thing. It was only our home. We can sleep under the stars like the first time we slept together." Shadow drooped his wings then saw Hiccup making his way towards us, his wings rose again.

"Al! What happened here?" He asked, quite concerned. I shrugged, "I have no clue. All I know is that my house is gone and so is everything that was in it. Which means that all of my momentos of my mother are gone, all I have left is the cloak."

"It's better than nothing." He said, "As far as I'm concerned, I only have a helmet made out of half of my mother's breastplate. Dad has the other half." I sighed, "I guess you're right."

"So, you're going to need a place to stay, right?" Hiccup asked. I shook my head, "No, Shadow and I can sleep under the stars." He looked over at his house, "I'm sure that dad'll let you stay over. It'll be like old times." He tried to say it on a lighter note which I'll admit, put me in a better mood. "Fine. What do we do now?"

"Well," Hiccup began, "The gang and I were planning on flying our dragons through the thicker parts of the forest and seeing how strong our connections are with each other." I shifted my eyes along the ground. "You can come if you like." He said.

I looked at Shadow who nodded in agreement. "Sure." I answered, "We need a little get-away to forget about all this."

\* \* \*

><p>"All right, turn so we can fit." I said. Shadow turned to the side and we squeezed through a gap between two trees. "Nice." I patted his head. "Wait a minute, what was that?" I asked, seeing something large and it was a brown-ish orange color. "Let's go see." Shadow flew to the ground, ready for whatever it was and looked up at the thing in the tree.</p>

"Meatlug?" I asked, she groaned and hid her face. The poor girl must have been embarrassed. "What are you doing in there?"

"We crashed." I heard. That was Fishlegs.

I looked around, "Fishlegs, where are you?"

"Up here." The response came. I looked up and saw Fishlegs a very small distance away from Meatlug. His backside was facing her so after she crashed, I guess that he flew forward a bit then got stuck.

"Need some help?" I asked then felt a breeze behind me. "Help with what?" Hiccup's voice asked. I looked back at him then pointed up, his line of sight flew to Fishlegs. "Yeah, let's help him." Hiccup said.

He and I both took a leg and began to pull but we didn't succeed in pulling him out. His pants however...

"And there goes my dignity." Fishlegs said awkwardly. Poor guy was obviously embarrassed.

Hiccup and I weren't happy with the sight either but after trying again, we realized that it wasn't going anywhere. "Well, this isn't working." Hiccup said. "You think?" I asked.

"I have an idea." Hiccup said and walked to Toothless. "Get him down but be careful. He's not wearing any pants."

"What does my not wearing pants have to do with-" Toothless fired at Fishlegs's backside, knocking him straight out of the tree. I

flinched, that looked like it hurt.

"I believe those are mine." Fishlegs said awkwardly to Hiccup, referring to his pants. Hiccup tossed them over and Shadow covered my line of sight with his tail then after a few short seconds, he removed his tail.

"So, what do we do about Meat—" The tree holding up Meatlug broke before Hiccup even finished his sentence.

"Could you guys not tell the others that Meatlug broke the trees? She's sensitive about her weight." Fishlegs asked us. I nodded, "Cross my heart."

"How'd this happen, Fishlegs?" Hiccup asked.

"Well, Meatlug and I were just out, taking notes on the flora and fauna, you know. Typical guy stuff." He twiddled his fingers, "Then something weird jumped out of the bushes, it was like a... flaming squirell." He grinned goofily.

"Really? A flaming squirell?" Hiccup and I asked in unison.

"Or a chipmunk." He followed it up with. Hiccup and I exchanged a skeptical glance towards each other and Fishlegs.

"Or some other flamable rodent. I don't know, guys. Whatever it was, it scared us. Isn't that enough for you?" He moodily flew off on Meatlug, upset that we didn't take his words into consideration.

"You hear that?" Hiccup asked the dragons as he got on Toothless. "A flaming squirrel." I got on Shadow as we flew side by side. "Everyone knows there's no such thing as a \_flaming squirrel!\_" The dragons dropped back to the ground when a burst of flame came in front of us. "You saw that, right?" We all nodded.

Hiccup and I hid behind a log and I poked my head over it, not seeing a flaming squirrel but a little dragon. "Hiccup, check this out." I said, he looked up and saw the little dragon as well. It was hiding under a bunch of rocks and it was just large enough to hold it in there.

"Let's go check it out." I said and slowly stepped towards the little dragon, Hiccup followed close behind. There's no dragon that looks anything like this in the Book of Dragons.

The eyes of the dragon were mischevious looking but were pretty young.

"Hey, little guy." Hiccup greeted. "Who are you?" He placed his hands on the rocks near the dragon.

"How are you doing, buddy?" I asked and knelt to the little dragon.

The little dragon growled at Hiccup's hands and snapped his jaws at him. "Whoa!" Hiccup gasped. "Calm down, little fella." I said softly. Hiccup even put his hands up in defense as he knelt to the dragon as well. "Haven't seen anything like ya."

Toothless and Shadow walked over to sniff the dragon but their irises narrowed and they backed away, growling at the little fella.

"You two aren't helping." Hiccup said. Shadow narrowed his eyes at him and looked down at the hiding dragon. He huffed and ran off, "What the-" I stood up and looked at the direction he ran in. "Shadow!"

"Don't worry, Al. He'll come back." I sighed and knelt to the small dragon again.

"Al, have you seen anything like this?" He asked, looking admiringly at the little dragon. I shook my head, "No. There's no breed like this in the Book of Dragons." Hiccup's brows rose a little.

"I think we've discovered a new species." Toothless came and pushed us both away from the small dragon. "Whoa, hey." Hiccup said. "Toothless, what's going on?" I asked.

The little dragon turned and brushed against his wing in the small hole, "It looks like he's hurt." Hiccup said. I broke from Toothless, he growled at me and I blew it off. "Don't be afraid, we're friends." I said to the little dragon.

Hiccup came next to me again and pulled dragon nip out of his vest, the dragon snapped its jaws. "It's okay, just a little dragon nip." The dragon came and sniffed at the grass. Toothless growled and the dragon screeched. "Come on, play nice." I said and the dragon leapt at Hiccup.

I heard a small tearing noise and Hiccup made a pained face before pulling the dragon away from him. "Okay; little dragon, big claws." He turned to me, "Al, you hold him." He handed the dragon to me and it chirped. "Sure, Hic. If it hurts you then you pass it down to me." I said.

"Let's go. We'll get him fixed right up." He said. The dragon chirped again and flapped its wings. He sniffed at me then crawled around me, digging his claws into my clothes from behind. I'm just glad that the cloak isn't damaged.

"I'd better get a ride because mine left." I said.

\* \* \*

><p>"This is so exciting! It's a whole new species." Fishlegs said excitedly.</p>

"Doesn't look like a flaming squirrel to me." Tuffnut said.

Fishlegs ignored the comment from the Thorston boy. "We have no idea what it's capable of!" I nodded, looking down at the small dragon.

"There's no telling what it might do." Fishlegs said.

Tuffnut lowered himself to the dragon, "Flame. Do it." He commanded, the dragon growled and bit his nose. He latched onto his face, making him flail wildly and Ruffnut began to laugh at her brother's

misfortune. "Get it off, get it off, get it off!" The dragon looked at Ruffnut then jumped at her face, getting the same reaction Tuffnut got. He looked at his sister, "Hey, that is funny." Tuffnut smirked.

The dragon came running back to Hiccup and I and curled around our feet. "Come on, guys, this is serious. We have to figure out what to do with him. He's hurt." Hiccup picked him up then Tuffnut asked while rubbing his nose, "He's hurt?"

"Dragons usually act out when they're scared. This one should be no different." I said and pet the dragon's head. Hiccup agreed, "She's right. He just needs time to settle down."

"New species, remember? We actually don't know what he'll do." Fishlegs said.

"Well, someone's gotta take him home." Astrid said then all of the teens stepped away from Hiccup and I.

"I'll take him." I volunteered. "I've dealt with hurt dragons before so I think he should be in good hands with me."

"Al, your house was torn down, remember?" Hiccup said. "Oh yeah. The day's been kind of hectic for me with this little... flaming squirrel." I said. "I must have forgotten."

"Well, big guy, I guess your getting two sombodies." He said.

\* \* \*

><p>"No, no, no." Stoic said. "They can't stay here. You come home telling me that Alyssa's house has been torn down <em>and<em> we're taking in this little dragon. You know that I have a one dragon limit."

"We can't just toss Alyssa out, dad. We have no clue where Shadow went and that means that she's pretty much defenseless." Hiccup said, I rolled my eyes when he called me defenseless. Stoic knows that I'm not, either. He's seen what I've done to Dagur. "Besides, this isn't a very big dragon. Think of him more like a flaming squirrel."

"Don't want one of those, either." Stoic said. "As for Alyssa being defenseless, what about when she stood up for you all of those times when you were kids? What about what she's done to Dagur?"

Hiccup bit his lip, "Well, dad, she's become so dependent on Shadow lately that she's forgotten how to take care of herself." He looked at me and mouthed 'I am so sorry.'

Stoic placed wood into the fireplace. "Well, Toothless? What are you waiting for?" Toothless began to charge up the plasma in his mouth but the small dragon blew fire out of his mouth and it landed in the fireplace, like he knew that's what Toothless was going to do.

"Looks like you've got torched." Stoic said to Toothless. He growled and turned his head away. "Oh, that's his name by the way; Torch." Hiccup's eyes became hopeful, "So, he can stay?"

"Well, can't throw him out now. I just named him." Stoic said then looked back at me. "As for Alyssa, I know that you're going to bug me for the rest of the night until I say yes so might as well get it over with now. She can stay but if Shadow comes back, he's sleeping either in your room or outside." He told Hiccup.

Hiccup was a bit taken back, "Why does Shadow have to stay in my room?" He asked. "I would just feel more comfortable if Shadow stayed with you." He said then left it at that. "Alyssa will sleep on the couch, as always."

Hiccup looked at me with a gaping mouth and I shrugged. "I don't understand either." I said then there was a thud that came from upstairs.

"Well, Hiccup. I think your new roommate has arrived." I said then Shadow leapt down the stairs and shook himself off. "Where'd you go, buddy? You had me worried." I said and pet Shadow's head, he purred and pushed against me. "Well, it's fine. You're here now."

\* \* \*

><p>"Okay, boys. Your first supper together." Hiccup said, carrying a basket of fish for Toothless and I followed, a basket for Shadow. We placed them down in front of them. "One hundred for you and one for you." Hiccup said to Toothless and Torch.</p>

"I didn't count how many fish are in here, Shadow but it's a lot." I said and looked at Hiccup. "Do you always have to make me look stupid in front of the dragons by counting the fish?" I asked. He pulled his head back, "What?" I shook my head, "Kidding, Hiccup." We went back into the other room.

\* \* \*

><p>Shadow looked at Torch with a shake of his head and a roll of his eyes but put a fish on his tail and passed it around Toothless's back so he wouldn't see. By the time Toothless looked down not a second later, Torch had eaten all of Toothless's fish, Shadow's fish and his own. Torch spotted the fish on Shadow's tail.</p>

Shadow was in shock at the small dragon's speed and Torch bit down onto the fish on Shadow's tail but in the process, also biting Shadow. He growled at the dragon, Toothless heard the commotion after seeing that his basket was empty then turned to see Torch on the fellow Night Fury's tail. His jaws snapped at the small dragon and he flew to the ceiling, away from Toothless and Shadow.

"Wow, Toothless, you sure are hungry tonight, aren't ya, bud? As for you, Shadow, I've seen how you eat in the great hall and this doesn't surprise me." Hiccup said, carrying the empty baskets away. He looked over and saw Shadow's tail, seeing the bitemarks that were horizontally bitten into the middle of his tail.

"What happened there? Did that happen when you went out?" Hiccup asked. Shadow glared up at the small dragon with a growl then reluctantly gave a slow nod to Hiccup. "I'll tell Al. She won't be happy."

\* \* \*

><p>"Okay, Torch. This is where you're going to sleep." Hiccup said. Torch chirped and jumped onto Toothless' bed. Toothless growled at the small dragon and threw him off the bed but when he turned back, Torch was right back on it. Toothless's eyes widened in shock.</p>

"Oh, look at that. He made himself at home." Hiccup said and pet Torch. "Toothless, you don't mind sharing your bed for the night, do ya?" Toothless growled and leapt up onto a rapture. Torch got comfortable on the bed then curled up to sleep.

He pet Torch again, "I hope he sleeps for the night, he hardly ate." Toothless growled at him and Shadow turned his head away while making a disgusted sort of face.

"And you, go to sleep." Hiccup said then looked to see Shadow sitting on the floor, waiting for Hiccup to say something.

"Okay, Shadow. You can sleep... wow, there aren't many places in here. Dad said that you either sleep in my room or outside. Al will kill me if I put you outside. Um, you could sleep with Torch?" He suggested. Shadow's ears laid back against his head moodily.

"Okay, you don't like that idea. How about... I don't know, the corner?" Shadow gave him a look that said 'Really?' "There aren't many places for you to sleep, Shadow. What do you want me to do?"

He suddenly remembered something, "Oh, you can't be serious." Shadow's ears came back up. "No." He said. "Alyssa's told me about how you two sleep together and the answer is no."

Shadow took a step towards him, "I already said no. I'm not going to be your substitute." Shadow turned to the side a bit and Hiccup sighed with relief. "Finally, you take no for an answer." He said and was about to walk over to his bed but Shadow's tail swept under his legs.

"Whoa!" He waited to hit the floor but it didn't come, he landed on Shadow's tail. "Al will probably kill me if I don't." Hiccup sighed. "Fine." He said, irritated. "I'll be your substitute for tonight then no more. You can use a pillow or something. Agreed?" Hiccup asked. Shadow smirked as he finally got his way and curled his tail and head around Hiccup and stretching a wing over him protectively. He sighed, "It can't be as bad as I think." He tried to convince himself.

"Um, Shadow, could you blow out the candle for me?" Hiccup asked. Shadow looked at him but did nothing. "Please." Hiccup rolled his eyes, Shadow perked an ear and Hiccup banged his head against the floor once. "Please, Shadow?" Shadow took a moment to consider then huffed it out before resting his head against the substitute.

Toothless didn't mind as the fellow Night Fury cuddled up against the replacement-Alyssa. He was more worried about the little dragon resting on his bed and the roar of an angry dragon somewhere outside.

But Shadow wasn't cuddling up against Hiccup because Alyssa wasn't

there, he was protecting him from the threat that was following the small dragon around.

## 8. Treacherous Trio (Terrible Twos) Pt 2

"Okay, Torch. Let's figure out what you are." Hiccup said then gave a small, uncomfortable grunt when he leaned over to put Torch down. "Odin's ghost, my back." He stretched his arms backwards.

"Sorry about that." I apologized. "Shadow likes companionship when he sleeps and you were there so..." I shrugged as I trailed off. Hiccup shook his head, "It's fine. I'll be fine."

"This is going to be so exciting. Documenting a whole new species, learning all about it!" Fishlegs, as usual when it came to dragons, said excitedly.

"Wait, learning?" Tuffnut asked, not willing to cooperate. "No thanks." Ruffnut said.

"There's nothing in the Book of Dragons that looks anything like him." Hiccup said. I rolled my eyes, "Hiccup, I think we've covered that already." I said.

"We even get to determine what it's called. That is- that is a really big responsibility. I don't know if I'm ready for that." Fishlegs said and Snotlout jumped in front of him, "I am! I'm going to name the snot out of it."

"Twenty inches for the wings." Astrid said. "That's a big wingspan." Hiccup said. Snotlout jumped in, "Big Wing. Big Span. Big Wingspan!" I cocked a brow but ignored it. This was Snotlout, it was to be expected.

"May I have the honor of administering the claw test?" Fishlegs said. He pulled out a scroll, unraveled it and held it in front of Torch. He sliced through it with his claws like it was nothing. "These talons... they're razor-like." Once again, Snotlout jumped in. "Sharp Claw. Razor Feet. Razor-Sharp-Claw-Talon-Feet!"

"Hold on, is he serious?" Tuffnut asked. I nodded. "Afraid so."

"Fishlegs, I think we both know what's next." I said.

"Only the single most important test that determines a dragon's reaction to eels." He said, obviously following with what I was saying.

Hiccup looked at us with a grin and made a small gesture for us to go on. "The eel reaction test." We said in unison.

Fishlegs pulled an eel out of a basket and held it up. The dragons all began to try and get away, Shadow pressed himself against a wall then made a mad dash out of the academy. The eel was held up to Torch. He nudged it with his nose, sniffed it then slurped it up like a noodle.

"He ate it!" I said, this was certainly different and of course, here

comes Snotlout. "Eel Eater! Come on, that's perfect." He said. We all rolled our eyes and walked away from him.

"Guys, has there ever been a dragon that was—" Hiccup didn't get to finish. "Never in recorded history." Fishlegs said. "We're in uncharted waters, my friend."

"Sure is unique." I said.

Hiccup pet Torch's head once again, "You hear that, Torch? You're one of a kind." He said. "Yeah, Hiccup, you totally didn't just slam the other dragons." I said with my usual sarcasm, he rolled his eyes at me. "You know what I mean."

"Now, if we can get him to fly." Fishlegs said.

"Maybe if Torch saw Toothless fly." Hiccup suggested. "Toothless! Let's take a ride, bud. Toothless!" He called, Toothless wasn't sitting too far from the academy but he didn't look like he was ready to go anywhere.

"What about Shadow?" Hiccup suggested. I looked over at the academy doors where Shadow rested, "You want to fly for Torch, Shades?" Shadow narrowed his eyes and flew out again, now going to rest next to Toothless.

"What's gotten into them?" Hiccup asked. I shrugged, "Who knows?"

Snotlout laughed mockingly, "So much for the dragon trainers." He stepped over to Hookfang. "We've got this." He got settled on Hookfang's back and Torch chirped in content. "Watch and learn." He said, Hookfang took off and brutally beat Snotlout with his flying just like he'd done in the trick competition, passing by the two stubborn Night Furies that didn't even blink when they passed.

"Okay, your turn." Snotlout said, out of breath. "But don't think that you have to live up to that." He got off of Hookfang and he growled at his rider.

Torch jumped onto the ground and walked awkwardly in a circle. It looked a little off. "What's he doing?" Ruffnut asked. "Oh, man! We broke him!" Tuffnut said. I laughed at what he said, that was just ridiculous. Torch chirped and Astrid suggested "Maybe something's wrong." Hiccup, assuming the worst, said "Or maybe he can't fly."

Sparks began to fly out of Torch's back as his running around in a circle got faster. The heat coming off of his back was strong and it was pretty bright. Torch began to lift off of the ground and flew in circles around the arena, sparks falling all over the place. He came back to the ground with a spin.

Torch jumped at Hiccup, "You are one incredible little dragon." He said in awe. I pet his head, "Got that right." Then my eye caught something on the ground, I looked down and gasped at the spiral burn mark. You don't see that every day.

"Whoa. Look at that burn mark." Ruffnut said.

"Huh. And look at this burn mark." He showed her his freshly burnt arm and she looked at it in slight disgust.

"Did you see how it flew? It spun like-like a typoon." Fishlegs said.  
"And he came back just like a boomerang." Astrid continued. Then of course, here came Snotlout.

"Hot spinner. Flaming come-backer!" Snotlout said, still trying to name the dragon. "No." Fishlegs said and shook his head.  
"Typhoomerang."

"Typhoomerang? No, I don't get it." Snotlout said. Astrid and I rolled our eyes. "That's too be expected." I said and she nodded.  
"Why do we try so hard?" I asked and pressed a hand to my temple. She shrugged, "No clue."

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless sat cautiously on the roof, ready for an attack it seemed. Shadow laid on the ground outside, not wanting in. I tried to get him inside but he kept growling and huffing, staying where he is next to the door.</p>

Torch put on Hiccup's Viking helmet and was running around, chirping and screeching. It was kind of cute.

"Okay, Torch, hold still. I'm trying to draw you." Hiccup said,  
"You're getting your own chapter." Torch turned up to Hiccup and chirped again. Hiccup grinned and made a growling noise towards him, making a clawing gesture. Okay, this has went from being kind of cute to being absolutely adorable.

Toothless barged in through Hiccup's window and tackled him, knocking him over and dropping the book and pencil.

"Toothless, look what you did." He said, Toothless growled. I looked out of the window and saw a black dragon flying off. I dropped my shoulders, Shadow left again. What is going on here?

"And now I have to get more charcoal. Behave yourself while I'm gone." He said and went back downstairs. I looked at Toothless, he gave Torch a growl and the small dragon jumped on me.

Hiccup saw out of the corner of his eyes, "Hey, it's okay, big guy. I'll be right back, just sit tight."

Torch's claws dug into me and Toothless growled, ready to jump but then another dragon roar was in the distance. Toothless looked out of the window and his tail curled to the side, hitting me in the back of the legs and knocking me out of balance. I fell on my back, and when I looked back up, Toothless let out a roar then glared at the dragon not two inches away from me. One thought went through my mind before it even registered the dragons running at me, 'Oh crap.'

Torch leapt over my head, his back claws grazing my cheek slightly and Toothless had accidentally knocked me into his bed. The blow was

hard enough to make me dizzy. I tried to get a good look at the moving figures that ran around the room.

"Toothless. Torch, knock it off!" I said, still seeing doubles and stumbled back a bit, my back hitting the wall. One of the dragons fired and hit the side of Toothless's bed. Toothless growled and I looked around the room, hoping that I could put it out with something. It would help if I wasn't seeing blurry doubles right now.

Luckily, I saw Hiccup come in and heard him shout, "Toothless! What in the name of Thor?!" He grabbed his blanket and patted the fire out with it. He coughed and Torch jumped on him, Toothless growled again.

"Toothless, why did you do this? What's wrong with you?" He asked, my vision getting better, his eyes became large and puppy-like. He screeched from Hiccup not listening to him and jumped out of the window. "Toothless, wait!" After Toothless not coming back, he looked down at Torch. "It's okay, big guy. He's starting to worry me too."

Hiccup suddenly looked at me as I kept wobbling. "Al, what's wrong?" He asked. I needed to sit down so I did on his bed. "Um... Toothless." I said but that was all that came out so far, my mind was jumbled together and I couldn't say what I was thinking.

"What did Toothless do?" He asked and put Torch to the side. I kept trying to think straight but it wasn't working, "Toothless... he, um... what did he even do?" Hiccup's brows furrowed. "Huh?"

"Um, fire. Toothless didn't like the fire." I said. Really? That was all I could get out?

Hiccup seemed a bit confused, "And?" He asked, wanting me to go on.

"And... and... Toothless chased Torch. He... he hit my head on the side of the bed." I shook my head, still wanting my thoughts together.

"He what?" Hiccup gasped.

"Accident. Toothless hit me and Torch on accident." I said, finally getting something useful out of my mouth. "Accident? So, was setting the room on fire an accident too?" He asked, worry getting the best of him.

"I don't know. I couldn't see straight. Toothless hit me from behind with his tail and somehow, the chase began." I finally said. "I don't know what made Toothless act up but he just began to run around willy-nilly. Torch jumped over me and Toothless accidentally kicked me into the bed."

"So, Toothless just snapped? He just went off on Torch?" I couldn't gather my thoughts once again and shrugged. "I don't know if Torch did something to him but if he did, it sure upset him."

Torch chirped innocently and opened his mouth at me, what's this about? I put a hand on Torch's nose and he chirped again, shutting

his mouth. I scratched the back of my neck and made a questioning hum.

"Did you bite Shadow's tail?" I asked the dragon. He jumped back and Hiccup looked at me with disbelief. "You've got to be kidding, right? Are you teaming up with Toothless and Shadow?" He thought for a moment then continued, "Is this because you're jealous that Torch and I have been spending so much time together?" I gawked at him with disbelief.

"Why would I do that? I'm just as into this dragon as you are. If not, more so." I said, getting defensive. "I was just looking at Torch's teeth and thinking about the bitemarks that I saw on Shadow's tail when you said that he got them when he went out."

"He did." Hiccup said, voice raising a little. "I asked if he did, he nodded yes."

"Was there anything strange about his behavior?" I asked, "I know my dragon better than you do, Hiccup. You don't see me telling you how to raise Toothless."

His eyes rolled, "How am I supposed to know everything about Shadow? All I know is that he's short-tempered and violent. Gee, I wonder where he gets that from."

"It's called protective instincts and loyalty." I growled then clamped my mouth shut because if I said anything else, it was going to get real. Hiccup did the same.

It was silent. The air was thick enough to be cut with a knife. Hiccup and I were in a staredown and neither of us were ready to back down.

A soft chirp came and nudged at Hiccup's leg, wavering his stature a bit and he looked down at Torch. He picked him up and held him close, "Let's get to sleep, big guy." He said.

I shook my head in frustration and went downstairs. I sat on the couch and looked up at the ceiling. It was usually like this after Hiccup and I fight. We tell each other off for a short bit then clamp our mouths shut before we say something we regret or so things don't escalate or so things don't get real.

We have fights rarely, only a few times a year. Normally we understand each other and keep by each other's side but like everyone else, we have to fight. Fighting occassionally maintains a healthy relationship. Our fights usually start from almost nothing but it builds up then suddenly stop. We didn't fight like my dad; fighting for no reason and all of the time.

Another thing; after an arguement, Hiccup and I don't usually talk for one to four hours. It gives us time to cool down, clear our head and get up the nerve to go and apologize to one another. So for now, it's going to be deafeningly quiet.

Well, it would have been if Shadow didn't knock over a table after flying into the living room. He quickly moved towards it and picked it back up in his jaws, placing it back down. I looked up at him, "What is it, Shadow?" He looked upstairs then back at me, he tilted

his head.

"It's nothing to worry about." I said. He laid his ears back while giving me and 'Oh, really?' look.

"Yes, really. You should go back upstairs and get to sleep." I said. Shadow shook his head and clawed at the door. "What is it?" I asked. "Didn't you just come in?" Shadow clawed at the door again then waited for me to get up. I shook my head then put a hand over my temple. "Not now, okay? I'm really tired."

Shadow looked between the door and I then came over and licked the top of my head. I scratched the back of his neck and said, "I'm sure that whatever it is can wait until tomorrow. Just get back to sleep for now."

\* \* \*

><p>Shadow went back upstairs and laid on the empty floor, not even bothering to look in Hiccup or Torch's direction. A lot was on his mind and going on not too far outside. He curled up in a ball then glanced up briefly at the window for a couple of seconds. Then he shut his eyes, in hopes of getting some sleep.</p>

Then Hiccup felt a new presence in the room and looked towards the black mass on his floor. He squinted his eyes a little so he could see better in the dark, he saw Shadow shift on the ground a bit then roll over, his tail swayed a bit and the bandages that rested over the halfway point of his tail.

Curious, Hiccup got up and maneuvered towards him. He reached for the bandages and gently began to undo them. The bandages were unwrapped and the bitemarks were once again revealed, Hiccup examined them closely then looked over at Torch. He looked between them a few times then rewrapped Shadow's tail, deciding that it would only be a coincidence that the innocent Typhoomerang's teeth would match the bitemarks on Shadow's tail.

### 9. Treacherous Trio (Terrible Twos) Pt 3

I walked outside with Shadow trailing behind me. It was sometime in the afternoon, I'd tried to clean up Hiccup's room where the fire began next to Toothless's bed. We still hadn't apologized so that's what I'm going to head off and do now.

"I don't know, it's like Toothless is jealous or something. Which is great, that means my first girlfriend is a dragon." There's Hiccup. Of course, he's looking for advice from Gobber.

"Another thing we have in common." Gobber responded. "There must be something going on under the surface. Dragons are complex creatures, Hiccup. They operate on many emotional levels. Me? I've only got the one."

"And Al mentioned something yesterday to me. There's bitemarks on Shadow's tail that kind of look like Torch's teeth but he told me that he got them when he went out. Al said that he's probably lying to me." Hiccup mentioned last night. "What do you think?"

"Did the dragon seem to be acting out of the ordinary?" Gobber asked.

"Al asked me the same thing. I don't know, Shadow's a weird dragon." Shadow perked his ears and grumbled softly at what Hiccup said.

"No shocker there." Gobber said and Shadow's ears fell again.  
"Especially considering the owner."

Then Toothless ran up to the blacksmith, roaring and pawing at the air to get Hiccup's attention. He ran in a circle and roared again, "You see?" Hiccup said, "This is what I've been talking about. Al said that he accidentally tackled her last night while chasing Torch."

Toothless roared again, "Toothless, settle down." Hiccup ordered before Torch leapt from his arms and in front of Toothless. He picked up the Typhoomerang and began to run off, Shadow and I only watched.

"Gobber, grab him!" Hiccup said.

Gobber leapt in front of Toothless, "You ready to dance, big boy? 'Cause I've got my dancing shoe on!" He tapped his foot, the real one, I mean.

Torch struggled in Toothless's grasp then sparked up, making Toothless instantly let go of him. So Toothless began to chase him through the blacksmith with Gobber on his tail, literally. Well, until he ran him facefirst into a shelf.

"My panpipes!" Gobber grinned, "Now I can get the band back together!"

Toothless ran for Torch again until the dragon hid behind Hiccup's feet. "Back down." Hiccup ordered, his face only inches from Toothless's. Toothless growled.

Both of their green eyes locked and it was tense until Gobber played a cheery tune on his panpipes. Hiccup was not pleased. "Not helping." He grumbled. "Toothless, I don't know what's gotten into you but I don't like it." Toothless ran off again and Gobber began to play another cheery tune, Hiccup glared in his direction. "What?" Gobber asked.

"Hiccup." I finally spoke up and he looked over at me, "Al." He responded, if that counts as a response.

"Listen, I'm really sorry about last night." We said in unison, he shifted his gaze to the ground then back into my eyes, we both know that we easily could have gotten out of hand last night. We usually kept our eyes locked after an apology, taking deep breaths.

We both stuck a hand out, "Friends?" It was insane that we could be so in sync. We took each other's hand. "Friends."

"Al, I have a favor to ask of you." He said. "What is it?" I asked.

"Could you take Toothless to the cove?" He asked, "Him being around

Torch is a little much. Too disasterous."

"Oh, Aly, I was wondering when I'd see you next." Gobber said and I looked up at him. "Why's that? Is something wrong?"

"No. You remember that long-sword you were wanting?" He asked and I nodded, "Yeah. What about it?" I asked.

"Well, I've gotten enough money to pay for it so here." He held out the sheathed sword to me and my eyes lit up. "You really mean that?" I asked in disbelief. "Why not? It's a newbie so I'm not too close to it." I grinned and took the sword. "Thanks, Gobber." I strapped it across my back and grinned. "I'll treasure it. Now, I have to go get Toothless so I'll get back to you guys later, okay?"

"Yep." Gobber said then went back to playing on his panpipes.

"See ya when you get back." Hiccup waved.

"Shadow, stick around with Hiccup and keep him company. No attacking Torch." I said, Shadow nodded and laid at Hiccup's feet. I made a hand gesture and said "So, I'll just go and get Toothless now." Then I left.

"Toothless, where are you?" I asked but I didn't really have to, I saw that half-tail sticking out from behind a large and full cart. I walked around and tapped him, "Toothless, let's go." I said, he seemed up for it for whatever reason and made a hurried gesture for me to get on his back.

I got on, hooked my foot in and flipped the tail out. Toothless took off not a moment sooner and flew quickly towards the forest. "No, Toothless, we're going to the cove, okay?" I said, he flicked his head to blow me off and kept flying. We flew past the cove and I began to pull him back.

"Toothless, we passed the cove. Where are you going?" I asked then finally got him to turn around, he wasn't happy at all. "We're going to the cove." I said, "If not, Hiccup will kill me. Besides, this if for your own good." He grumbled questioningly and I shook my head.

I went and landed him in the cove, I got off and said "You have to stay here." He groaned questioningly, "I don't want to do this, Toothless. I'm sorry. Hiccup wants you and Torch separated until he can figure this all out."

I turned to walk away, as much as I didn't want to but Toothless jumped in front of me and growled. "I don't want to leave you, Toothless. I don't. I know that Torch isn't as innocent as he seems." I said and Toothless's ears perked. "I saw the bite marks on Shadow's tail and Torch is the only dragon with teeth like those. I believe you guys. Whatever you're trying to protect us from, I believe in you but for now, I have to go. I promise that I'll be back tomorrow." I said then began to walk off. Toothless trilled softly and watched me climb out.

\* \* \*

><p>"So, how'd Toothless take it?" Hiccup asked, not really wanting to know the answer. "He was upset but he should be fine, especially

after we figure out what to do with Torch."<p>

"I didn't want it to go that far, poor Toothless." Hiccup said and I sighed, "Do any of us really do?" He took a deep breath, "Shadow was well-behaved while you were gone. He kept a good distance from Torch and slept for most of the time."

I pet Shadow's head, "Sounds like him." Then I stood up, "Anyway, let's get some sleep. We still have more work to do at the academy tomorrow."

\* \* \*

><p>I woke up early in the morning and left a note for Hiccup, it was a simple one. 'Going to keep Toothless company. Shadow will be here with you, he shouldn't harm Torch so I wouldn't worry about a thing.'<p>

As I was walking towards the cove; I saw something large, red, white with a huge wingspan. It kind of looked like Torch. Oh, my sweet Odin. Torch is a baby Typhoomerang and this must be...

I ran the rest of the way to the cove and called for Toothless, "Toothless! Toothless, where are you?" I suddenly slipped on a bunch of loose rocks and fell into the cove but landed on a rough, scaly surface. "Nice save." I hooked my foot in and flipped the tail out.

"I know what you were trying to protect us from now. Mama Typhoomerang, right?" I said then Toothless nodded before taking to the sky. "We have to go and tell Hiccup. If Mama Typhoomerang doesn't get Torch back soon, she's gonna... she'll torch Berk!"

Toothless slapped me with an ear, a basic gesture for 'Pull yourself together, woman!'

"Okay, let's just get to Hiccup." I said, calming down after being ear-slapped by Toothless.

We flew over the forest and looked cautiously through it to make sure that Mama Typhoomerang didn't see us but of course, we're so lucky that Mama Typhoomerang saw us flying just overhead and began to follow us.

"Oh, great. Torch's scent must be on me." I said, "Listen, big mama, I don't have your baby!" I called back to her and she blew a generous amount of fire at us. I angled Toothless down so the fire wouldn't hit. "Reasoning isn't gonna do much, is it, Toothless?"

He looked back at me with a face that said 'You expect me to know this how?'

I shrugged, "You're a dragon, she's a dragon. Ask her out on a date and win her over with your Night Fury charm! I don't know!" He shook his head and looked ahead again, "Okay, into the trees. She's pretty big and she'll have to tow these trees down if she wants to get to us."

We lowered into the trees and twisted between a bunch of trees whether they were standing or fallen. Crashing was heard behind us

and then I face-palmed. I completely forgot that when administering the claw test that the claws are very sharp and almost like a Timberjack's.

This may be harder than I thought.

\* \* \*

><p>"Fishlegs, I need to talk to you." Hiccup said the next morning at the academy after having a discussion with most of the other teens. "Sure, are we administering more test on Torch? I think we have all of them covered, don't we?" He asked, still curious about the new species.</p>

"No, it's not that." Hiccup said, "It's just that Shadow has bitemarks on his tail and they kinda look like Torch's teeth. Could you have a look at it for me?"

"What about Alyssa? It's her dragon and she has dragon intellegence like mine." Fishlegs asked, making Hiccup shake his head. "She's kind of in a mood right now." He responded, "Which is kind of why she's not here. She's out in the cove with Toothless."

Fishlegs wanted to keep asking questions but knew that it wasn't his business and stayed out of it. "So, where's Shadow?" He finally asked.

Hiccup whistled and Shadow's resting body lied on the outside of the academy, next to the railings. He grumbled, yawned and trudged into the academy, glaring at Torch then looking at the ground. Hiccup placed Torch down on a table and knelt down next to Shadow's tail, he unwrapped it and showed the bitemark to Fishlegs.

"It's got to be a coincidence, right?" He asked.

"I don't know, it could be. They look like they match perfectly but I don't know. Torch seems to be the only Typhoomerang, doesn't he?"

"When I asked Shadow if he got the bite when he went out, he nodded." Hiccup informed, "Well, Al will be pleased to rub it in my face when I see her again."

Right after their exchange, Ruff and Tuff came in on their Zippelback. "You guys would not believe what we just saw." Tuffnut said.

"Excuse me, I believe we're having a power struggle." Snotlout said.

"We are not having a power struggle. That subject got dropped a long time ago." Hiccup said softly.

"The whole forest, ultimate destruction." Tuffnut said, ignoring what the cousins had just said.

"It was beautiful. The whole thing was torched." Ruffnut said, grinning widely. Tuffnut nodded while smirking.

Hiccup looked down at Torch who was back in his hands, and wondered

curiously. "Torched?" Torch chirped. "Show me."

"Like we said, ultimate destruction." Ruffnut repeated herself as the dragons landed near the spiral burnmark in the middle of the forest.

"We've seen that burn mark before." Hiccup said, looking down at the spiral burn mark in the ground. "Not this big." Astrid said.

"You know what this means, don't you?" Fishlegs asked, "Big burnmark..."

"Big Typhoomerang." Hiccup completed.

They looked up to see a large Typhoomerang blowing fire over the treetops but not burning them. None of them had noticed the black dragon that bolted back down into the trees.

"He looks really mad." Tuffnut smirked, looking at the Typhoomerang.

"That's not a he, it's a she." Hiccup said, "That's Torch's mother."

\* \* \*

><p>"Come on, how hard can it be to lose an angry mama?!" I shouted to the sky, momentarily forgetting that I was on Toothless and we began to fall to the ground until I flicked the tail out again.  
"Sorry about that." I said, getting ear-slapped again.</p>

"Would you stop that?! That's the sixth time today." I said. Dragons nearby caught my attention and I looked at them through the trees, the dragons were easily recognizable and the teens weren't too far from them.

I looked back and saw that Mama Typhoomerang was now heading for them, of course, Hiccup had Torch and now Mama Typhoomerang is going to go after them. I saw Hiccup put Torch down and got on Shadow's back, "Come on, bud. Let's go."

Shadow began to fly off but nooo, Torch latched onto the saddle from behind. "You guys keep going that way, I'll lead her back into the forest away from the village." Hiccup said.

"Hiccup!" Astrid called as the adult Typhoomerang gained on him since he had Shadow going at a somewhat casual pace. Hiccup looked back at saw Torch on the saddle, "Oh, please stop following me." He said then looked back at Mama Ty, he pulled Torch off the saddle and let him fly. I saw the small dragon get right back on and face-palmed.

He saw the cove entrance not too far in front of Shadow and him then leapt off of Shadow's back and into the cove, he was so lucky that Toothless and I had just passed over the cove when he did. Toothless caught him in his front paws, I looked down at Hiccup, keeping Toothless steady.

"Hiccup, you moron! Didn't you see me flying Toothless?" I asked and pulled him up before landing Toothless quickly. I got off and he scooted up to get properly positioned on Toothless, "No, I didn't."

He said, "If you didn't pass over I could have fell to my doom."

"But you didn't and you're welcome." I said and got on Shadow. "Let's take care of Mama Ty."

We took off into the air, "Did you just call her Mama Ty?" "That's not important right now." I said as we barely missed Mama Ty's flame.

"Okay, okay. Toothless, evasive manuvers." He ordered then after a short while, looked back at Mama Ty. "Oh, why won't she stop?" Then Torch popped his head out from behind him. I didn't even notice that he switched dragons.

"Torch?! What are you doing? You need to be with your mother!" He said and kept flying. Torch chirped and let his tongue hang out of his mouth. "Al, we have to try something else. Any ideas? Anyone?" He asked, "Wait, we can use her size against her." He answered his own question.

"I tried that. I tried to plow her through the trees and she cut them like a Timberjack." I said, he shook his head. "Not when there's a cliff." I furrowed my brows and before I could ask what, him and Toothless dove. Shadow and I following only inches away. When I saw the ground below, I knew what he meant and we turned, Mama Ty couldn't get back in control and crashed into the ground.

Our dragons stood in front of her and her eyes shut. "I hope she's okay." Hiccup said. Torch got off of Toothless and ran to his mother, he nudged her and began to push on her large head with his small one.

"Well, she's breathing." I said, then she lifted her head up and looked at Torch. Two other little Typhoomerangs ran off of her back and greeted Torch, a blue one and a yellow one. They nuzzled each other and I grinned at Hiccup.

He patted Toothless's head, "We did a good job. Everyone's back where they belong." He said. I sighed, "It's about time." I sprawled out over Shadow's back, "It was a pain trying flying away from her." Hiccup laughed at how overdramatic I was when I sprawled out, "You goofball." He said, then we noticed Torch get on Mama Ty's back.

We both couldn't help but wave. "Good-bye, Torch." Hiccup said. "See ya around." I said. Torch chirped at us then Mama Ty sparked up and circled around as she flew off.

"Let's go home, guys." Hiccup said. Not a moment later we took off back towards the Haddock house.

\* \* \*

><p>Gobber was playing a nice, quiet melody on his panpipes. Hiccup was making Toothless beg for his food; not in a bad way, in a pet way. Shadow's head rested on my lap after eating his dinner and I was petting him.</p>

"Ah, I wrote this just for the occasion." Gobber said and began to play the same tune. I grinned and rubbed Shadow's chin then Hiccup

began talking.

"We should've known that the dragons we're only trying to protect us." Hiccup said, rubbing Toothless's head. "It's just what they do." Toothless pulled his head up and began to hack, Hiccup literally sat on the edge of his seat and made a disgusted face then a fish tail landed on his lap.

"And then you do that." He said.

I began to laugh at the face that he made and felt the fish get slapped to the side of my head. I looked over at Hiccup, one leg was crossed over the other and he was whistling. I narrowed my eyes, he looked back at me. "Al, what's with the look?" He wanted to laugh.

I threw the fish back at him and he ducked, it hit Toothless right between the eyes. "Ooh, sorry Toothless." I apologized. Toothless shook the fish tail off of him and it landed in front of Shadow, he glanced down and ate it.

"Well, this fish fight has been fun." Hiccup said with a grin. "We should do that more often." I laughed, "Yeah, because you just love getting cod-slapped, don't you?" He shook his head, still grinning. "Sure, why not?"

"Al, I actually have something to tell you." He said suddenly and I sat up straight, a plain shift that showed him that I was all ears. "You know how Torch had those two siblings and Shadow said that he got the bite when he went out?" He brought up and I threw my head back.

"You're seriously bringing this up again?" I asked.

"Yes." He nodded, "You need to understand that Torch was innocent in this situation. Okay, yes, they were Typhoomerang bitemarks but what Shadow said and Torch's siblings, I just think that maybe you were being too hard on him."

"Okay, let's settle this right now. Shadow wouldn't lie to me." I said then Shadow looked up at me. "Shadow, did Torch bite you or not?"

Shadow nodded.

I looked back at Hiccup, "See? He wouldn't lie to me."

"Shadow, would you lie to me?" Hiccup asked and Shadow shook his head.

"Would you lie to Hiccup?" I asked sternly and he nodded.

"What?" Hiccup gaped at Shadow, asking in disbelief. "Shadow set me up!" He complained.

"Come on, Hiccup. This isn't the first time you've been tricked by a dragon, is it?"

He thought it over then mumbled "No."

"So, which dragon tricked you into thinking that it was innocent?" I

asked, folding my arms.

"Shadow." He responded and I slouched, "Hiccup, that's the incorrect answer. If you were being tested on this, you'd \_fail\_!"

"Calm down, it was just a joke." He put his hands up in surrender.  
"Torch is the answer. Sorry I didn't believe you earlier. I just didn't have all of the facts, I guess."

"It's not like you had any control over it. And Hiccup, you're forgiven." I said.

#### 10. In Dragons We Trust Pt 1

Hiccup was falling. That's always a good way to start the day off, isn't it? I'm not messing around, he was falling and we weren't going to do anything about it. We were only watching.

How many of you freaked out when I said that? The only reason that we weren't doing anything is because Toothless had rushed to catch him and succeeded. You see, it's a trust exercise that Hiccup and I are trying out with the others and their dragons.

Hiccup just flew up next to everyone again after getting situated on Toothless after he had caught him. "Okay, who's next? Al, you wanna have a go at it?"

I didn't say anything in response. I only stood up on Shadow's back and leapt off the side. I shut my eyes and waited to hit leathery hide that I knew would be there within seconds, of course, there it was. I grabbed onto him and we bolted back up next to the others.

"All right." I grinned. "Fishlegs, your turn."

"I'm not gonna jump." He said.

"It's a trust exersize, you have to believe that she's going to catch you." Hiccup said.

"I'd rather do my trusting on the ground, thank you." Fishlegs said and stubbornly turned his head away from Hiccup and I.

"Like this, Chickenlegs." Snotlout teased then slid off of Hookfang with a 'Whoo-hoo!'

But Hookfang kept flying casually, he must have either not have noticed or just didn't care. All of us exchanged glances and looked back at the Nightmare.

"Should we mention something to Hookfang?" Tuffnut asked.

"Let me sleep on it." Ruffnut responded and lolled her head slightly.

"Considering the part of the island that we're near, I'd say so." I said cautiously, knowing exactly where we were.

"Hookfang, get him." Astrid said and got his attention, he looked at

her then Toothless gave a soft growl and that made the Nightmare finally look down with wide eyes. He saw Snotlout and flew after him but even though he went after his rider, Snotlout said "Not feeling the trust!"

I was on the edge of Shadow's saddle and watched Snotlout get on Hookfang's back then crash into Mildew's house, making a huge hole in the roof. I face-palmed and looked over at Hiccup, "Am I the only one that knows that we're going to hear about this later?"

"Something tells me no. Oh man, let's get going." He sighed, knowing that as soon as we got back that Stoic would get after us both.

\* \* \*

><p>"Shingle again? Didn't we have roofing material for dinner last night?" Hiccup joked with a soft laugh at the end. Stoic's face was unamused and Hiccup's nervous grin died down as he stared both of us down. I took a deep breath, already knowing that he was going to start up.</p>

"It was an accident, sir." I said.

"She's right. Mildew is probably making it sound worse than it is."

"A dragon and a huge, obnoxious boy crashed through his roof, twice." He explained. Hiccup and I exchanged a glance, I rested my head against my hand as Hiccup said "Sure it sounds bad if you're gonna stick to the facts."

"Out of all the houses on the island, a dragon had to crash through Mildew's?" Stoic asked.

"Yeah, you might want to talk to him about his attitude." Hiccup suggested.

"Either that or a good can of whoop-hide." I crossed one leg over the other and did a small hair flip.

"I gave you two the responsibility of training the dragons, everyone knows that. All eyes are upon the both of you. Whatever those beasts do reflects on you and whatever you two do reflects on me." He said.

"Okay, I apologize." I said.

"Sorry, dad." Hiccup said.

"You two are going to go back to Mildew's and fix that roof, without the dragons." He explained.

Hiccup and I exchanged a grin, "The dragons sure caught a break, didn't they?" I said, making the two of us snicker quietly.

"Eh, not so fast!" Stoic caught our attention once again. "Aren't you forgettin' something?" He grunted then his boots came up and were handed to Hiccup. "It's boot night!" Hiccup took them with a groan of disgust and held them away, sadly put them next to the dragons' sensitive nostrils. They weren't pleased with the smell in the

least.

"Al, you should consider yourself lucky." Hiccup said.

"Why's that?"

"Because... you get to help me this time." He said and tossed a boot at me. It landed in my hands right below my face, the stench going straight up into my nostrils and I pulled it away quickly, "Why?" I asked and Hiccup kicked the chair lightly, "Doesn't matter why, get up."

I got up and held the nasty boot a considerable distance away from me. "I hate you." I said. "You only wish that you could hate all of this." He gestured to himself.

"But you just gestured to all of you." I said, already knowing what he was getting at but it was just a game that we played. We put the nasty boots outside and hurriedly went back inside, "I think that that's enough... excitement for one day." Hiccup said, not quite finding the right word.

I nodded in agreement, "You're telling me. Today was rough." Then turned my attention to Shadow that had his nose wrinkled up from the boot's scent. "Well, Shadow, good night." I said and pet across his head. "Oh, and sweet dreams, Hic."

"Sweet dreams, Al." He yawned.

\* \* \*

><p>"Where are my boots?" Hiccup and I heard Stoic ask as we were eating an early breakfast.</p>

"What's that about?" Hiccup asked. "Well, breakfast is done. Let's go and find out." I said then put away our dishes.

"Where are your boots?" Stoic asked, I guess there were people outside that he was talking to.

"They've all been stolen. Every last one!" Gobber said.

"That explains why me feet are so cold." I heard Bucket from outside.

"Who could have done such a thing?" Mulch asked.

Oh, and make way for the one and only Mildew. Ugh, what now?

"All I know is that they left a mighty big footprint." He used his staff to point at Zippleback prints in the snow but there was something kind of... off about them. They didn't seem right.

"Oh, those are Zippleback tracks." Fishlegs pointed out. "You can tell by the half-moon shaped archs but that's dragon 101, I don't need to fill you guys in on that."

"So a dragon walked through here; a Zippleback, according to my friend Fishlegs, but that doesn't mean that he took everyone's boots." Hiccup attempted to reason but nooo.

"There's only one way to find out; follow the tracks." Mildew smirked. The scaly spines on Shadow's back rose up and his ears laid low. "Shadow, calm down. It'll be fine." I said. He shook himself and huffed in Mildew's direction.

"Fine, let's go wherever the Zippelback tracks take us." I said.

\* \* \*

><p>The footprints stopped inside of the academy where a Zippelback laid snoring and resting quite peacefully next to a large pile of torn boots.</p>

"So it's a bunch of boots piled around a Zippelback. That doesn't mean—" Hiccup spoke but was cut off when Stoic held a torn boot only a foot from his face. "Okay, fine, he took the boots."

"How are we supposed to do any work in this weather without our boots?!" One Viking demanded. "This is outragous!" Another shouted.

"How long before something's done about this, Stoic?" Mildew asked with his usual, crotchety, know-it-all tone. "How much more can we stand?!" His voice rose and I curled my lips back in disgust with the old man as many of the other Vikings cheered in encouragement for some sort of punishment.

Gobber glared at the other Vikings then cut in, mocking them. "Listen to yourselves; 'My feet are cold!' We're Vikings! Everything is cold!" He put his back towards them a little, "I'll fix your boots for ya, you'll be back to work in no time."

"You all heard Gobber," Stoic said. "You'll be getting your boots back as good as new."

"That's it? No consequence for these dragons?" Mildew asked.

"Mildew, it's only boots." I said sharply, "Get over yourself."

Stoic gave a firm stare to me then looked back at Mildew. "She's right. The world isn't coming to an end."

But of course, Mildew has to get yet another word in. "Oh, don't be so sure. Dragons are wild beasts and there's no telling what else they'll do behind our sleeping backs."

"They don't destroy things on purpose." I said and Mildew dragged out a sigh, hearing that already many times before.

"No, but he does have a point." Hiccup said, stumping Mildew for a brief moment and making him stutter out a 'what?'

Hiccup continued, "Dragons are wild animals, and they need us to keep an eye on them." I knelt and patted one of the Zippelback's heads, "Come on, get going." I said softly and making them head out of the academy.

"Rest assured, we will do just that." Hiccup stated proudly.

\* \* \*

><p>"We're going on night patrol." Hiccup said, Tuffnut showed immediate excitement. "Night patrol!? I love it! Question; what is it?"<p>

Hiccup made a gesture for me to take this one and I sighed softly, "Well, we patrol... at night. To keep an eye on the dragons and make sure that the poor dears aren't blamed for anything else." Shadow warbled softly and I grinned at him, "That's pretty much it." I finished with a shrug.

"Have either of you cleared this with our parents? Because some of us may not be allowed out after a certain hour." Fishlegs twiddled with his fingers and Snotlout took the opportunity to pick on Fishlegs once again. "Now allowed or afraid?"

I rolled my eyes, "Seriously, Snotlout, one day there's going to be a day when someone smacks some sense into you. Besides, you really need it." I commented, earning a glare to which I responded with a cheeky grin.

"Well, things happen after dark." Fishlegs whispered dramatically.

"Yes, like Night Furies are very prone to become more active at dark. Sometimes even swooping up snotfaced-punks at feeding them to their young." I said flatly towards Snotlout, earning another glare. Shadow's eyelids drooped when he saw the glare being given to me and fired a small plasma blast at Snotlout's chest, knocking him off of the small tower.

"Thank you, Shadow." I grinned and pet his head, making him purr quietly.

"Guys, seriously, you heard Mildew. He wants the dragons banished." Hiccup cut in.

"Permission to shoot first and ask questions later." Ruffnut requested.

"Permission to skip the question." Tuffnut requested, attempting to top off Ruffnut once again.

"We're just patrolling. No one is shooting anyone." Hiccup said.

"I have a question; what's fun about that?" Tuffnut asked, irritated that it wouldn't be 'fun'. I banged my head against the side of one of the posts and said "It's not supposed to be fun."

"Yeah, it's a Hiccup idea." Astrid followed suite. "Exactly." Hiccup said then realized what he just agreed to, "Wait, what?"

\* \* \*

><p>"Shadow, you know what? You, Hiccup, Toothless and I have got this in the bag. The night is practically our realm." I said confidently, Shadow strutting by my side. He sure was happy to be

active in the night once again.<p>

"I would say that we should go and scare the willies out of Snotlout but in the dark, he might soil himself. Besides, you and I are probably going to have to work overtime because knowing the twins, they'll be out screwing around."

Shadow lowered himself with a growl and then we saw Hookfang pass by in front of the great hall. I face-palmed, "Snotlout can't even watch his own dragon, let alone himself." I muttered and Shadow gave a soft laugh since he knows it's true.

"Hookfang." I said quietly, making the Nightmare look over at me. "Come here, Hookfang." He walked towards me and gave me soft eyes similar to a puppy's. "What'cha doing out and about? Knowing Snotlout, he probably wasn't keeping a good eye on you."

"I heard that!" He called as he passed between two houses. "What are you doing with my dragon?"

"Why weren't you watching him? Who knows what could have happened?" I asked.

"Listen up because I'm going to tell you once, Hookfang and me, we're warriors. We can take care of ourselves without your prissy insight." Snotlout mocked.

"Oh, so we're really going to start calling each other names now? Normally, I would be above such a childish act but I'll make an exception this time." I said, "You, Snotlout; are one obnoxious, rude, difficult, absolutely infuriating—" Shadow began to push me away from him with a soft growl, I knew what he was trying to tell me. I almost always tell it to him and this time it was his turn to tell it to me so I nodded in understanding. "You're right, bud. It isn't worth it."

"I should tell Hookfang that I'm sorry about that but now isn't the time. We still have this night duty to perform." Shadow warbled and looked to the sky, his eyes grew soft when Toothless and Hiccup began to fly next to us.

"You guys see anything?" Hiccup asked and I shook my head, "Not much. Nothing at all, really."

"Well, Mildew will be glad to know what dragons do at night; they sleep like everyone else." Hiccup said. "Technically, Night Furies are pretty much supposed to be out and about at night." I said and Hiccup landed Toothless, "I know, Al. I know."

\* \* \*

><p>"Well, this is just great." I said with sarcasm as I looked at the claw marks on pillars through the great hall. "Who could've done such a thing?" Stoic asked.<p>

"Well, it looks like a dragon to me." Fishlegs said. I shook my head with a disappointed scowl at him, he didn't notice, though.

"We don't know that for sure, Fishlegs." Hiccup said, emphasizing so that way Fishlegs might catch on but as usual, nope. Fishlegs had to

keep explaining.

"Sure we do." He said. "These clawmarks were obviously a Monstrous Nightmare. The spacing of the talons is dead-on." He ran a finger over them.

I face-palmed and said in unison with Hiccup, "Once again, thank you, Fishlegs."

It's normal for Hiccup and I to say things in unison, most often the things that we say aloud are sarcasm which is pretty easy to catch on to. Hiccup and I were startled the first few times that we both shared the same thought but over all of the years, we've gotten used to it.

"Oh, stop. This is basic stuff." Fishlegs said, flattered.

"How could this happen? We had every dragon accounted for at all times." Astrid said then my gaze shifted over to Snotlout with a harsh scowl. "Right, guys?" Snotlout spoke up, "When you say 'At all times' and 'every dragon' what exactly do you mean?"

Hiccup face-palmed. "Okay, what happened, Snotlout?" He grinned nervously, not really wanting to know the answer.

"Well, I was detaining a suspect who wasn't showing sufficient respect to the sash." He pointed a thumb proudly to his 'DUMB' sash. (Dragon United Monitoring Brigade.)

Gobber came up to him, "I think I showed sufficient respect to a sash that says 'DUMB'."

"We've gotta change that name." Astrid said quietly.

"Anyways, as I was questioning said suspect, Hookfang may have and I'm not saying he did, but it is possible he may have wandered off for a few..."

"Seconds?" Ruffnut asked and was pushed to the side by Tuffnut.  
"Minutes?" He asked.

Snotlout kept silent for a moment then finally said, "Hours." That made everyone groan. "That's way longer than minutes." Tuffnut groaned.

"Hold on a minute, before I found your dragon, he was gone for hours?" I asked then wanted to slap myself for saying that I found him.

"Wait, Al, you found him?" Astrid asked. "Where?" I kicked at the floor, not making eye contact with anyone. "Near the great hall." I said quietly, making the teens groan again.

Oh, and \_of course,\_ guess who? It's Mildew, right on time!

"Oh, it's true!" He said, "The great hall. So many memories, my three weddings, their three funerals. Oh, the funerals." He sighed the last part happily.

"The dragon must have gone on a rampage." Gobber said. "Hate to say

it, Stoic, but you're gonna have to-"

"I know what has to be done." Stoic cut him off. Mildew jumped in, "So do I." Stoic turned to Hiccup and I, "Starting tonight, every night; I want all the dragons put in the academy under lock and key." He said.

"That's it?" Mildew asked again, "Look what they did!"

"Stoic, sir, this doesn't make any sense. None of the food was touched, and dragons don't just destroy things for good reason." I said.

"I don't know why dragons do what they do but I'm not gonna let them do any more damage." Stoic said and began to walk away with Gobber and Mildew. I rolled my eyes and grumbled softly, "This is such rubbish."

## 11. In Dragons We Trust Pt 2

Later in the day, we all flew our dragons out to the academy to let them sleep, something I knew that I wasn't going to get tonight since now I need Shadow around to sleep.

Fishlegs was singing a lullabye for Meatlug but she was restless and rolled away from him, upsetting him. "That usually works. Our whole bedtime routine is upset! Thanks to-"

"Watch it, Fishlegs." Snotlout said, "At least my dragon doesn't need a lullabye and a blankie." Even though Snotlout said that Hookfang didn't need it, the Nightmare still seemed to like the sound of it. He broke out into a grin and dropped his jaw slightly.

It made me laugh because of how funny and cute that was. Shadow had noticed it as well and chortled against my lap where he rested his head. Speaking of lullabies, I stroked the top of his head lovingly and rested against him, starting to quietly sing to him.

"You are the sunshine of my life\_

That's why I'll always be around\_

You are the apple of my eye\_

Forever you'll stay in my heart." I sang softly, his lids began to lower slightly.

"I feel like this is the beginning\_

Though I've left you for a million years\_

And if I thought our love was ending\_

I'd find myself drowning in my own tears." Shadow reached his head up, stuck his tongue out and licked my face, making me grin.

"You are the sunshine of my life, yeah\_

That's why I'll always stay around\_

\_You are the apple of my eye\_

\_Forever you'll stay in my heart.\_" He warbled softly and began to quietly snore when his head lowered again. Blissfully grinning and stretching against the ground.

"You must have known that I was lonely

\_Because you came to my rescue\_

\_And I know that this must be heaven\_

\_How could so much love be inside of you?\_" Now, surely, he must have been asleep. Sometimes he is before the song is even done but I don't mind, I usually keep singing since it keeps him calm.

"You are the sunshine of my life, yeah

\_That's why I'll always stay around\_

\_You are the apple of my eye\_

\_Forever you'll stay in my heart.\_"

I finally finished and Shadow's snoring continued. As long as he knows that I'm next to him, he can sleep peacefully. Now, the difficult part will be getting away without him knowing. If I shift my weight from under him, he'll notice and wake up.

"Sweet dreams, buddy." I said, still stroking his head then jumped when Hookfang growled out loud. "Snotlout, calm him down, would you?" I asked quietly so I wouldn't wake Shadow up.

"What? I'm not the boss of him!" He said, "He always flares up when he's angry."

"Or goes on a rampage." Hiccup said then got on Toothless before flying off.

Now that Hiccup mentions it, there wasn't a single scorch mark anywhere in the great hall. Only claw marks. No food was touched, no burn marks, just claw marks across the pillars and tables.

The Zippleback prints that were no deeper than a normal Viking's footprint and then there's the great hall.

"Would you all hush? Shadow's sleeping." I said, glaring the twins and Snotlout down, seeing how those three were making the most noise.

"Why should we?" Tuffnut asked tauntingly and came over with Ruffnut towards Shadow. "Does he get destructive when he's woken up?"

"Well, does he?" Ruffnut urged.

"Both of you go away." I growled.

"That probably means he does!" Tuffnut shouted, catching everyone's attention. Shadow's eyes burst open and the irises were narrow slits.

His gaze landed on the twins and a growl rose up in his throat, he leapt onto his feet and began to charge up his plasma.

I ran towards him and stroked his face once again, "It's okay, boy. It's fine." His narrowed eyes began to grow into their usual, soft and large puppy-like eyes.

"There you go. I know that Stoic said that the dragons are supposed to sleep in the academy but what he doesn't know won't hurt him." I whispered and got on his back.

"Where are you going?" Astrid asked.

"Just for a ride." I said. She folded her arms and rose an eyebrow. "And to get away from the twins for a while." She kept the same look on her face and I patted Shadow's head, "Let's go."

We flew off and I decided to help Hiccup out with convincing Stoic that the dragons are innocent but something caught my eye. Toothless.

He walked inside of the armory and just as Shadow landed, an explosion burst out from the inside of the armory, Toothless bolted out and sat on the nearby steps, watching the fire consume the armory.

"Whoa, whoa!" I coughed at the burst of smoke that flew out of it. Smoke doesn't immediately start up in fires, it smelt like... gunpowder or something. "Shadow, let's go get some water!" I said then we took off to get some buckets. Well, I got a couple of buckets, Shadow just held water in his wings that he clamped up against his body.

"It was him! He set the armory on fire!" A Viking shouted and pointed at Toothless. Hiccup saw how casually Toothless was sitting and dropped his buckets to his sides, "Toothless?"

"Look at all of our weapons. Gone." Stoic said.

Gobber lifted up a sword, "Prudence! My poor darling, I'm so sorry. You should've had a long and bloody life." He planted the sword into the ground sadly.

"She didn't have to die, Gobber." Mildew said, he seemed to have been here for a bit. "Hiccup's dragon left us utterly defenseless." I glared at the old man once again and looked towards Stoic and Hiccup.

"You guys, he lives on the other side of the village and yet he always seemed to show up just after something happens with the dragons. Okay, am I the only one that thinks that a little odd?" I said quietly, Stoic didn't seem to hear me and Hiccup nodded slightly, pretty much having a good idea on what I was getting at.

"Dad, you know Toothless wouldn't do this." Hiccup said.

"Sure, listen to your boy, Stoic. That's what got us into this mess!" Mildew cut in then leaned in towards Hiccup, "See what happens when you leave your dragon all alone to wait outside?" Hiccup's eyes

widened, "What did you say?" He asked hesitantly then looked over at me, then mouthed 'Did you hear that?'

I nodded with a dark scowl on my face. "Every single word."

"The dragons have done too much damage, it's no longer safe to have them on Berk." Stoic finally said, "I want them gone."

"What?" Hiccup and I gasped in disbelief.

"Yes! Finally!" Mildew said ecstatically. I glared and shouted, pointing into the distance. "You live on the other side of the island, what are you even doing here?!"

Stoic turned me around, "Listen, you two are going to round up all of the dragons and take them to Dragon Island." Then he turned his attention towards the audience that stopped to watch what was happening, "Starting tomorrow there will be no more dragons on Berk."

The other teens had shown up and gasped.

"Ah, what a glorious day that will be." Mildew took a deep, relaxing breath and sighed. "Party at my house!"

"My Thor, get out of here!" I said sharply.

"Don't forget, you two. Right after the dragons are dropped off, you'll be fixing my roof." He said, I put an arm over Hiccup shoulder and began to walk off with him, "Don't really care, Mildew. Just be happy your getting your wish."

I only led Hiccup as far as to the other teens, then removed my arm. "This is horrible. It's the worst day of my life." Astrid said. I put a comforting hand on her shoulder. "We'll figure something out. We usually do."

"Besides, something here doesn't add up." Hiccup said, eyes shifting along the ground. "All I know is that I'm losing my dragon." Fishlegs said softly.

"For now, yes but I-I just need time to fix this." Hiccup said. "What are you talking about? It's over." Snotlout had given up hope. "Forget it, it's over." Ruffnut said. "Yeah, forget it." Tuffnut said.

They had all walked away and Hiccup looked back at me, "Nothing here adds up." He repeated and I laid my back against a wall, "No but who's going to believe a couple of teenagers? Especially after Mildew got the whole island riled up, again."

"The footprints, the great hall, the armory fire." Hiccup named off and I listed what was wrong with all of it, "The footprints were as deep as a normal Vikings, no matter how sneaky a 5,000-pound dragon is, it's still going to leave a deep footprint. Not to mention the great hall, not a single scorch mark, no food was touched. And we all know that Toothless would never do such a thing as setting the armory on fire."

"We'll discuss this more tomorrow. It's going to be a long day." He

said. I sighed, "Why not?"

\* \* \*

><p>We all solemnly flew our dragons to Dragon Island and landed them on its shore. I got off of Shadow and hugged his neck, he warbled softly and held me tightly between his chest and head, he was afraid to let go.</p>

"This isn't good-bye. I promise you." I said, he held on tighter and purred. "Shadow, how about one last song before I have to go?" He let go then gave a solemn nod. "All right, buddy." I got ready and removed his saddle, placing it next to me.

"\_Just when you think hope is lost\_

\_And givin' up is all you've got\_

\_Blue turns black, your confidence is cracked\_

\_There seems there's no turnin' back from here\_" Shadow laid down and placed his head on the saddle like a pillow, looking up at me with his usual puppy eyes.

"\_That's when you can build a bridge of light\_

\_That's what turns the wrongs all right\_

\_That's when you can't give up the fight\_

\_That's when love turns nighttime into day\_

\_That's when loneliness goes away\_

\_That's why you've gotta be strong tonight\_

\_Only love can build us a bridge of light.\_" Shadow seemed to understand what I was getting at and grew a grin. His sad eyes turned into happy, hopeful ones.

"\_When your feet are made of stone\_

\_And your convinced that you're all alone\_

\_Look at the stars instead of the dark\_

\_You'll find your heart shines like the sun.\_

\_Let's not let our anger get us lost\_

\_And the need to be right comes with way too high a cost.\_" I referred the last two lines there to Mildew. He thinks that he just has to be right about the dragons and he'd hurt a lot of people and dragons on Berk by sending them away. Shadow and I were getting so worked up about it, too.

"\_That's when love can build a bridge of light\_

\_That's what turns the wrongs all right\_

\_That's when you can't give up the fight\_  
\_That's when love turns nighttime into day\_  
\_That's when loneliness goes away\_  
\_That's why you've gotta be strong tonight\_  
\_Because only love can build us a bridge of light.\_

\_Deep breath, take it on the chin\_

\_But don't forget to let love back in.\_" I finished the song and Shadow yawned tiredly.

"All right, you'll be fine, baby." I said, stroking the top of his head lovingly. "I'll be back for you. I promise." Shadow put his head up proudly and licked my face. "Yeah, I love you too. I've gotta go now." I said and began walking away, after stepping up onto the boat, I had to look back at Shadow.

He kept his head laid on the saddle and watched the boat as it drifted off. Most of the dragons just watched as it drifted off away from the shore. I leaned over the side and watched as the distance between us grew.

"There's something Mildew said that I keep thinking about." Hiccup said and I turned around to look at him, "He said 'See what happens when you leave your dragon all alone to wait outside?' He knew Toothless wasn't with me just before the armory fire."

"You really think that he set the armory fire?" Astrid asked.

"We think we did all of it." Hiccup said and gestured between me and him, "And we think he did all of it so my dad would get rid of all of the dragons."

"That's a pretty serious accusation." Astrid folded her arms, "How are you going to prove it?"

"I have a pretty good idea." I said and Hiccup rolled his eyes, "Al, we aren't going to kill him so he can't testify." He said and now it was my turn to roll my eyes.

"Darn it, Hiccup. That's not it." I began, "What I'm getting at is that he wants us go and fix his roof when we get back to the island. That's one big open door right there. You following?"

Hiccup nodded, "I'm following and I'm with you."

\* \* \*

><p>I held a board in place while Hiccup hammered against it with a nail sticking out of his mouth. I did a quick check-out and saw nothing, "Clear." I said, Hiccup handed me one end of a rope and spit out the nail in his mouth. He threw the other end of the rope down and began to climb down the rope. "Hold tight." He reminded and I lowered him on purpose, "Whoa, I almost lost my grip." I joked and he scowled, "Stop that!" He whispered harshly and I stopped but that didn't stop me from grinning.</p>

He finally got down to the floor and looked around the inside of the house. A Gronckle head on the wall, a painting of a Nightmare being killed, Hiccup sniffed the inside of a cauldron and gagged with a hand over his mouth.

"Hiccup, do you usually just break into random houses and sniff their cauldrons?" I asked he glared up at me. "Keep glaring and I pull the rope up." He pointed at the door, "I could just go out through there and climb back up." I shook my head, "Not if I pull it up here with me."

Hiccup's attention averted to the pictures of his wives faces on the walls. "Hm, wife... wife... wife..." He saw the picture of Mildew's pet sheep Fungus next to the rest of the pictures. "Well, Mildew definitely has... a type." He said then shuddered.

"Come on, Hic, we don't have all day." I urged. His eyes widened when he came across a curtain then he pulled them back, his eyes widened further and he pulled out Zippleback feet and the back foot of a Monstorous Nightmare. "Look at these!" He whispered.

"Mildew's coming!" I whispered back and his eyes averted to the shaking door knob. He looked at the dragon feet in his hands then began to think quickly before getting out of the way.

Mildew burst through the door, "Good evening, ladies." He said to the pictures of his wives. "What's that you say? Nothing? Good." He looked towards the curtain where Hiccup found the dragon's feet and scowled a little. He reached for the curtain and pulled it back... empty except for the dragon's feet.

He pulled them out, "These served us well, didn't they, Fungus? Shame we have to get rid of them." I looked down at Hiccup who was holding onto the rope and was just off the edge of the roof. He watched Mildew and Fungus quietly just as I was.

When Mildew walked outside, I noticed a drop of sweat drop off the side of Hiccup's cheek and land on Fungus's head. He bleated irritably and looked up at us, he continued bleating and I rolled my eyes, "Wow, you're annoying." I said quietly.

I pulled Hiccup onto the roof and we ran to the side of the roof, we watched Mildew approach the side of a cliff then throw the dragon's feet out into the ocean. Hiccup and I stared off at the cliff, taking deep breaths and we exchanged a glance with each other. We knew that we had to do something about this.

\*\*The songs used in this chapter are:\*\*

\*\*\*"You are the Sunshine of My Life" by Stevie Wonder\*\*\*

\*\*\*"Bridge of Light" by P!nk\*\*\*

## 12. Alvin and the Outcasts Pt 1

\*\*The previous chapter will most likely be the only one that contains songs in it. \*\*

Toothless happened to pass by Barf, Belch and Hookfang getting ready to fight with each other once again. After exchanging a short glance between the two, he growled and warned them not to or else something would be done about it. The two stubbornly turned away from each other then took off in opposite directions.

Toothless left to go under a rock where he put his saddle and sniffed it, taking in the scent of his rider. After catching the scent again, he ran towards the edge of a cliff and stared off into the vast waters, grumbling impatiently.

A nudge hit him softly from behind and he turned around to see Shadow, he was holding a fish in his jaws and placed it on the ground. He perked his ears up and looked expectantly at Toothless with a soft trill.

Toothless gave a grateful grin to the other Night Fury but turned his back to him again. Shadow pushed the fish closer to him with his paw but still, Toothless didn't want it. So Shadow sighed softly and began to trudge away with his head down and his eyes on sea, waiting for his rider to return.

\* \* \*

><p>"Ugh, we've been here for hours and we haven't found anything!" Snotlout complained. I stared over the open sea then looked at him.</p>

"It's been ten minutes." I said moodily.

"And you've done nothing but build \_that\_." Hiccup followed up, gesturing to a sort-of castle thing that Snotlout had built made of stones for walls and twigs for towers. Well, I guess that's what it was all supposed to be.

"\_That\_," He said, "Is Snotlout Manor and all I need now is a queen." He rose his eyebrows as he grew closer to Astrid. She scoffed at him.

Tuffnut smirked down at 'Snotlout Manor' and began to stomp on it, kicking the walls over, making Ruffnut cheer him on and freaking out Snotlout. He ran over and asked "What are you doing?" He was quite alarmed that all of his 'hard work' was crushed.

"Storming the castle." Tuffnut smirked.

"Guys, knock it off." I said sharply. "Mildew has framed our dragons of crimes that we know they wouldn't and didn't commit and you're out here making and destroying castles?"

"Manor." Snotlout corrected.

"The day I'm corrected by a—" I began but Hiccup stood in front of me and wove his hands in defense.

"Whoa, Al. Take a breather." He said, I did as instructed. "Keep doing that and you'll be fine." He patted my shoulder and turned back to the other teens.

"Anyway, Mildew had dragon feet in his house and me and Al watched

him throw them into the ocean." Hiccup informed.

"I don't mean to be Norbert the Negative but the ocean is really, really vast." Fishlegs said. "And the chances of us finding those dragon feet are about as good as Snotlout and Astrid-"

"Don't go there." She warned.

"Going nowhere." Fishlegs retreated into himself.

"Fishlegs is right." Astrid agreed. "Even if he did throw them in the ocean, they're not just going to wash up on shore here."

Almost as if on queue, Snotlout shouted cheerfully. "I found it!"

"Great!" Hiccup said then cleared his throat to Astrid, "You were saying?" He kept going in Snotlout's direction.

"Not dragon feet." I said, folding my arms and already knowing that Snotlout found something entirely different. "It's going to be something that will have no use to us."

"I haven't seen this since I was a baby." Snotlout cuddled a bludgeon shortly then whacked himself on the head with it. "You never forget your first bludgeon." He held it close once again.

"See? What'd I tell you?" I asked, unfolding my arms to make a gesture at him then folding them back up. "How will this be useful to us in getting the dragons back?"

"Just keep looking." Hiccup sighed.

\* \* \*

><p>"We're telling you that we saw a pair of Zippelback feet in Mildew's house." Hiccup attempted to convince his father and Gobber. "He must have used them to make the footprints of the dragon who supposedly took the boots."</p>

"And the claws of a Monstrous Nightmare, most likely used to create Hookfang's 'rampage' in the great hall." I followed.

"Then let's go have a look at them." Stoic said.

"There's a problem with that." Hiccup said, "We also saw him throw them in the ocean." His voice grew more and more quiet the more he spoke.

"I know that you're both very upset about the dragons but you're going to need evidence to accuse a man of high treason." Stoic said.

"Evidence?" I scoffed, really annoyed and was about to speak some more and Hiccup covered my mouth. "Al, let's just go, okay?" He asked. He knew that if I stayed, I was going to go off. I sighed and nodded, "Fine, let's go for a walk."

\* \* \*

><p>"Guys, we have to prove Mildew did it if we ever want to see our dragons again." Hiccup said for the umpteenth time since the day began.</p>

"I just hope they're okay." Astrid said then looked over the cliff we were walking near. "Why would one of our ships be docking there?" She pointed at a ship that rested a distance away from Berk shores.

Hiccup came over and pulled out one of his many spyglasses so he could check the ship. He lowered the glass and put it away, "It's not one of our ships." He said.

"Then who is it?" I said, hand reaching back for my sword.

"We might figure out if we tell dad. Come on!" He said and took off, Astrid and I trailed just behind him. "And put your sword away, will ya? Running with sharp objects isn't safe."

"But Astrid runs with sharp objects all the time!" I accused childishly on purpose just to see what he'd say.

"That's because Astrid's a bad influence." He responded.

"Watch it, Haddock." She said with narrowed eyes.

"Well, what do you want me to say?" He said then skidded to a stop, put one of his hands over the one that I had on my sword, "Would you put that away already?" He said and put it in my sheath.

\* \* \*

><p>The Vikings that Stoic had later gathered up into the great hall clamoured worriedly and were most likely frightened. Berk was going to be attacked by some people from an island some distance away from here called Outcast Island. The most dangerous one that I've heard of among the many chattering voices was 'Alvin the Treacherous'. Well, isn't this fun?</p>

"Everyone, this is no time to panic!" Stoic instructed the Vikings and slammed his hands down on the table. "That's what the Outcasts are counting on!"

"Stoic!" One Viking named Sven called and approached him.

"Sven, did you get a count on them?" He asked.

"About thirty men at least. All armed to the teeth." Sven responded.

"Without any weapons, we'll never be able to fight them head on." Gobber said.

"We have no weapons!" Mildew said quite overdramatically. "And Outcasts have invaded our shores! All thanks to your two \_amazing dragon trainers\_ and their dragons!"

"I don't have time for this right now, Mildew." Stoic said. "Mulch, you and Bucket gather up the others and the children. Get them to Thor's beach, they'll be safe in the caves there."

"We can help fight." Astrid objected. "We've been trained as warriors."

"She may have been trained but I was born a warrior." Snotlout said cockily.

"Take this." Stoic said and handed an old hatchet to Astrid. "It was Alvin's but go with the others. You can help protect them." The two left not a moment later.

"Let me go get the dragons. At least if we have them, we can defend ourselves." Hiccup said and Stoic sighed, "Go but be careful. We don't know what Alvin's capable of." Hiccup left with a nod but I remained and looked up at Stoic, he didn't seem to notice that I was there still.

I put my arm to my back and grabbed the sheath of my sword, I began to pull it off of my back and held it out towards Stoic. "Take it." I ordered. He looked at me then down at the sword in my hands then back up at me. "I'm not kidding. Take it."

He seemed to consider it for a moment then sighed, "I can't." He said, "You're still considered a child." I rose my brows and was about to open my mouth to say what Astrid had but he cut me off, "But still a warrior, nonetheless. You have spunk... like Astrid and the others. One of the main reasons why I liked you around Hiccup, except you know, you didn't mistreat him." He said and it really meant a lot for me to hear that.

I know that I've mentioned before that Stoic has treated me somewhat kindly on a few occasions and on others he's treated me pretty crappy and the relationship between us two is sort of unstable but it's enough for both of us to manage.

"Keep the sword, go find Hiccup and help him get the dragons." Stoic put a large hand on my shoulder, I nodded obediently, looked down at the sword then put it back on my back. "Thank you, sir." I said.

"Don't mention it." He said, "Now go."

I nodded once again and dashed out of the great hall.

Then after only a few short seconds of running, I found Hiccup running down the docks and rushed to his side. "What are you doing, Al?" He whispered, "Your footsteps on the dock scared me half to death!"

"Your dad told me to come with you and you should've already known that I was coming with you anyway." I said.

"All right, fine." He said then down at the very bottom of the dock, another Outcast ship landed and they rushed out of their small boat. We gasped and saw another, larger one coming through and pushed ourselves against the stony wall next to us.

I looked around then began to pull Hiccup along back up the steps to get away from the docks. "Come on." I whispered then looked down the road to our right and Hiccup looked down the road to our left. I

looked at the house next to us and slid under, I pulled Hiccup under by his good leg.

"Warn me next time you do that." He whispered as Outcasts passed us by. I clamped a hand down on his mouth and heard the Outcasts chatter amongst themselves.

"Keep looking!" One ordered.

I waited for the flames to grow dimmer, which they did then answered him. "There wasn't enough time to warn you, Hic."

I felt the presence of something or someone behind us and looked back to see a shuddering Fishlegs. Hiccup saw him too and let out a gasp of surprise. "Fishlegs!"

"A-Alvin's looking for you two." He stuttered and shivered.

"Why's that?" I asked then checked the roads again for anything suspicious.

"He's looking for the Dragon Conqueror." He said, this time boldly.

I looked back and saw Hiccup's eyes widened about as large as my own had grown. He looked at me with the same expression then straightened up and said, "Let's go." He wriggled out from under the house.

I pulled the hood from my trusty cloak over my golden-coloured hair so it wouldn't reflect any light and since the cloak was dark, I could blend in with the darkness of the night much easier.

"Where are we going, exactly?" Fishlegs asked.

"You know what Alvin looks like, right?" Hiccup asked.

\* \* \*

><p>We followed Alvin at a safe distance and out of sight, hiding behind of the large walls of the Haddock house.</p>

"All right, Stoic, show your face!" One man yelled, it was Alvin according to Fishlegs, then after a brief silence said "The old coward's turned and run."

I reached for my sword but Hiccup laid a hand over mine to keep me from pulling it out. I let go and kept listening to the Outcasts conversation.

"I spotted fresh tracks leading into the forest. And there's a few reports of a big guy with a bucket on his head, heading down to the beach." Another Outcast had said.

"We'll split up." Alvin said. "You four go to the woods."

"Where will we go?" Yet another asked.

"We're going to the beach!" Alvin said, clearly excited with his work so far. "How many hostages do you think a single dragon conqueror is worth?"

"Seven. No, eight!" One said.

"Got it, sixteen for 'em both." Alvin said.

"What do we do now?" Fishlegs asked.

"Go to the woods and warn my father. Al and I will try to get ahead of Alvin and warn Mulch and the others." He said then made a gesture for me to come on.

"Okay, okay. Let's go." I said.

\* \* \*

><p>Malicious laughter was what we heard and we ducked behind a few trees, listening intently. "That's it, keep moving!" One Outcast shoved Bucket from behind. I reached up for the sword again and my eyes narrowed, I was about to pounce until I thought I saw something then stopped in my tracks.</p>

I quite know what I thought was so familiar but ignored it and remembered the main priority; get to the dragons. I let go of the sword and made a head gesture to Hiccup. He understood and followed me out of the forest.

But that sort of gave us a problem. We had to get to the docks if we wanted to get to the dragons but they were loaded with Outcasts so Hiccup and I began to search more and more over the island. There was no way for us to get out and to the dragons, we were trapped like the others.

As Hiccup passed by me as we crouched along the cliff where just below us, most of the villagers were being interrogated by Alvin. I stopped to watch as Hiccup continued on.

A hatchet flew through the air and I recognized it from not too long ago when Stoic had given Astrid Alvin's hatchet. Alvin had caught it while it flew toward him. "Oh, would you look at that? My old hatchet." He said, "I was wondering when I'd get that back."

Astrid was tossed up next to him. I felt rage begin to bubble up inside of me and I growled softly, my hand once again, flew towards my sword.

"Trying to kill Alvin the Treacherous?" Avlin mocked Astrid. "You're not as smart as you look." He made a half-circle around her and rose a hand "Now, tell me, who are the dragon conquerors? Tell me!" He pulled her hair roughly and that drew it for me.

I leapt from where I was and rolled when I hit the ground, got onto one knee and drew my sword then pointed it at Alvin with intensity and determination in my eyes. "Leave her alone." I demanded. "I'm a dragon conqueror. You got your answer now let her go."

"What are you doing?" She asked me but I ignored her question. I was more focused on getting her away from him.

"You? Who are you exactly?" Alvin asked skeptically.

"Let Astrid go and then you'll find out." I said darkly, the hood

keeping me covered nicely. He reluctantly let go and made a gesture for her to come over which she did, she knows my voice well enough.

"Now, answer my question. Who are you?!" He asked, much more impatient this time. I threw my hood back, "Hudson. Alyssa Hudson." I answered with a sharp glare.

"Hudson, eh?" Alvin asked, "I think I have a man in my group named Hudson."

"Common name." I responded and stood up, not lowering the sword.  
"What do you want with me?" I asked.

"I've heard there was two of ya." Alvin said.

"Then you've heard right." Hiccup's voice came from behind Astrid and I. I looked back and saw him leap down next to us. "I'm also a dragon conqueror."

Alvin and the other Outcasts laughed mockingly, "Okay, one girl that I've never even heard of and the other is \_Stoic's little embarrassment\_!" He mocked. "That's a good one!"

"We both drove the dragons from Berk." I said. "Look around. You don't see any on this island, do ya?"

Alvin actually took the time to look around and after seeing nothing, Hiccup gave a nod to Astrid and she jumped into the conversation.  
"It's true. All of the dragons are afraid of them. They've even conquered Night Furies!"

Alvin stepped up to both Hiccup and I threateningly, "You're bluffing." He said.

"Oh, are we now?" I mocked, finally slipping the sword back into its sheath.

"Only one way to find out; take us to Dragon Island." Hiccup said with a sort of smirk on his face.

Alvin looked between the both of us then made his desicion, we were going to Dragon Island.

\* \* \*

><p>After getting the two of us shoved onto the boat, four large soldiers stood around with their spears intersecting and not letting us get much movement. They'd taken my sword from me and that did <em>not<em> lighten my mood.

"You know how I said that I had a Hudson?" Alvin asked me as we barely began to leave Berk's shores. I nodded, glaring him down.

"Well, I decided that you two should meet." He said then the doors to the lower level of the boat opened and who I saw shocked me.

It was like seeing a ghost, I became pale and wide-eyed.

It couldn't have been real... a nightmare, perhaps.

Out of the boat's lower regions stepped...

My father.

### 13. Alvin and The Outcasts Pt 2

"Miss me, sweetheart?" He asked mockingly and my back straightened up, chills ran up and down my spine.

My breathing got heavy and I forgot about everything else that went on around me, my head ached horribly and my wide eyes narrowed a bit but remained wide still.

I've seen this man as my dad my whole life. He's abandoned me many times, hurt me more times than I can remember, he's made me live in fear, in pain, he has taken advantage of my mother because of her size and strength.

He wasn't fit to be my father, he wasn't fit to be anyone's father. He wasn't a father at all.

This isn't my father, he was only Slade Hudson.

Nothing more.

I'm done with him.

"No, I didn't." I spat at him.

"Oh, you two really do know each other. It was just a guess." Alvin said. "So, Slade, I take it this is your niece or daughter, yes?"

"Daughter." He informed.

Alvin chuckled, "You should've told us that you have a daughter, no less, one that's a dragon conqueror."

"I didn't think she had it in her." Slade responded honestly. "I didn't think she could do more than cook and clean like her mother."

Take that back.

"I thought you said her cooking was terrible and the house was always a mess." An Outcast to my left said.

"I did." Slade laughed.

"Take it back." I glared savagely then my voice rose. "You take that back, now!"

"What'll you do if I don't?" Slade asked. "Your mother's cloak? I thought when I demolished the house, everything was destroyed along with it."

"So you tore the house down and you used the storm to cover it all

up. You knew that no one would come out during the storm and you wouldn't be seen so you demolished the house in hopes of me being inside of it as well." I said.

"Yep, right on the money!" He grinned maliciously.

"Well, you didn't and I'm a dragon conqueror so if you try anything now, I will unleash a full scale fury on you." I said darkly.

\_Night Fury.\_ I completed in my head.

"So, tell me. How are you alive?" I asked darkly.

"Oh, the night you betrayed me." He began and my glare intensified. "Well, Stoic decided that I wasn't worth a funeral and tossed me over the cliff nearby. I fell into the water and blacked out, after drifting about for a while, I was pulled up on an Outcast boat and met my old friend Alvin and they did their best to heal me. It worked like a charm."

"Old friend?" Hiccup asked and I almost jumped, I'd forgotten he was here.

"Ah, yes. Slade and I go way back." Alvin said and draped a shoulder over Slade. "I remember the day when we picked up that short girl with the long, bright hair. Wasn't she just a little ray of sunshine?" He mocked.

"In more ways than one." Slade laughed. "Wench was lucky we didn't kill her. She wasn't good for much. Well, other than-"

I didn't let him finish when newfound rage burst in me, "You half-troll, no-brained, back-stabbing-" Two of the Outcasts had grabbed onto me to keep me from going anywhere. "Lousy, deranged- You made her suffer! My mother! You'll pay!" I began to kick and struggle more violently than I could ever remember.

"This won't be forgotten or forgiven! You deceived us! You'll pay!" I continued to shout.

"You're so weak." Slade said and walked over, "How'd you become a dragon conqueror?" I reached a foot up and kicked him in the stomach but only hurting my foot. The adrenaline in my body didn't allow me to feel pain.

"Like it?" He rose his shirt and showed a chest plate. "Don't want any more accidents, do we?"

"It wasn't an accident." I growled and we kept in a distant glare then he walked away, down into the lower levels of the ship again. The Outcasts let me go and returned to their old position.

All of this time, he's been an Outcast living on Berk and no one even knew.

"I'll make him pay." I muttered then paced behind Hiccup near the Outcasts behind him. "You all will. I'll make you pay!"

"Al, calm down." Hiccup tried to reach out but I ducked away from his touch, "You're getting worked up and that won't be good if we're

going to fight dragons. You have to pull yourself together so that way we have plenty of energy when we fight the beasts." He convinced, still keeping up the dragon conqueror front.

I gulped down the lump that grew in my throat and tried to calm down like he requested but my heart was beating brutally against my chest and blood coursed through my veins, my hands were balled into tight fists and after a few very long and painful minutes I began to slowly calm down.

I kept my mind on the more positive side; I knew that I was coming closer to Shadow by each passing second and I was impatient, anxious, and everything remotely in between.

"I'm pretty sure your father's have told you plenty about your island's most feared enemy." Alvin said and puffed his chest out proudly.

Hiccup and I exchanged a short glance of confusion. "Who's that?" Hiccup asked then realized "Oh, right. You."

"No, not really." I said, "Never even heard about you guys until last night."

"Yeah, not so much." Hiccup followed.

"Really? Not a word?" Alvin asked.

I shook my head, "Nope." Hiccup said.

"Nothing?"

"No."

"Nothing about Alvin?" Wow, he sure was offended. You know what? Good.

"Nope." Hiccup did a fake inspection on his nails and I shook my head once again, perfectly containing the dark smirk behind my bored mask.

Alvin looked really mad but who cares? Really? I bet he could cook an egg on his forehead with how fuming he was.

"Look, Al," Hiccup began and I looked towards him.

"What is it?" I asked.

"No, not you. I was talking to Alvin." He explained.

"Oh." I said.

"Anyway, Alvin," The guards let him pass by to talk to Alvin in a more personal space. "All me and Alyssa care about is that as long as we do what we say, you will leave the people of Berk in peace."

"On me word, son!" Alvin said and put his hands on his hips. He sounded sarcastic to me, my eyes narrowed.

They really have no idea what they're getting themselves into.

\* \* \*

><p>Shadow picked up on a familiar scent as a boat pulled onto the shores, he stood up on his resting place that was on top of a large pile of boulders and looked down at the people on the ship.</p>

Just a bunch of unfamiliar people around Hiccup and Alyssa, the presence of the other large Vikings unsettled him and he growled, arching his back at the unfamiliar faces and scents. He didn't want them around his rider, he wanted them gone.

\* \* \*

><p>Alvin pushed me and Hiccup from behind with my own sword, "Is the sword really necessary?" Hiccup asked.</p>

"I would very much like to have that back." I grumbled, "And if you give it back to me, I give you my word that I won't harm you all with it."

\_For today. \_I completed in my head.

"Don't worry about it Alvin." Slade said, getting off the boat with a crossbow in hand, "She doesn't have the guts to hurt the leader of the Outcasts in front of an entire boatful."

\_I'll show you.\_

"Fine, here." He threw the now-sheathed sword at me and I threw it back over my shoulder where it belonged. I glared at him then there was a screech, a grin almost became present on my face.

"Odin's ghost!" Alvin gasped in surprise when Shadow landed in front of us with teeth bared at the Outcasts, and around the same time, Toothless emerged from a cave in front of us. "Are those-

"Night Furies." Hiccup and I completed, he allowed me to continue. "The unholy offspring of lightning and death itself."

The other Outcasts readied their crossbows and Hiccup put his hands up in defense, "Hold on, stop! It will only make them angrier. Watch and learn, Al you take that one and I'll take that one." He pointed to Shadow then to Toothless.

"No worries." I said and looked back at Shadow.

"By all means, proceed." Alvin mocked then chuckled, he spoke up to the other Outcasts. "I hope you're not squeamish. You're about to see dragons eat some kids."

Hiccup approached Toothless and he pinned him to the ground, licking at his face. He whispered something to Toothless and began to make his way towards the rock where I believe he left Toothless's saddle. He looked up and gave a curt nod to me, telling me to go on. He looked back at Toothless, "You cannot defeat me! You dirty dragon."

I left my sword alone and did a half-circle around Shadow, he perked his ears in confusion. "Play along." I whispered to him, he caught on

immediately and pounced at me, pinning me to the ground with bared teeth.

"None of you shall defeat the dragon conquerors!" I heard Hiccup continue.

I ducked under his chest and rolled out between his front and back legs, he growled and jumped to where I faced him again. I stood up and pulled out my sword, his eyes widened slightly but remembered that I told him to play along. He growled again.

"Boy, what are you doing to that dragon?" Alvin demanded, he was looking at Hiccup as the last strap of Toothless's saddle was done up. He jumped onto his back and hooked his foot in.

I took that as my signal to get on Shadow, putting my sword away and jumping on his bear back. "Where's the saddle?" I whispered, Shadow's eyes averted to a large pile of boulders. "We'll get it in a bit, okay?" He groaned.

"By the way, it's not dragon conqueror." Hiccup said and nodded at me.

I joined in with the next part. "We are the dragon trainers."

Toothless growled and they flew into the air. I smirked when Shadow flew up to the boulders and took the saddle in his mouth before taking off to follow Hiccup and Toothless.

I smirked at the Outcasts, "Suck on that, Slade!" I laughed maniacally and Shadow let out a muffled roar, due to him holding the saddle in his mouth.

"Here, let me take that." I said the stood up on is back, "Fly steady. This won't be easy." Shadow flew casually even though I felt that he was tense and wanted to go faster. "Okay, just a bit longer."

Shadow ducked quickly as a boulder from a catapult flew over us, I almost fell off but Shadow had swerved so I wouldn't go flying off his back. I pulled the last strap over and latched it in and as I settled back onto the saddle.

Shadow's slow flying had just made him an easy target, arrows were firing towards us, aimed specifically at his neck and head. If I didn't latch the saddle on, I could've used it as a sort of shield. I wish I knew how fast Night Furies really were, because the sudden burst of speed Shadow gave scared the crap out of me.

I watched as about everything passed by in a sort of blur. He could have given me a heads up or something. I'd never went this fast before, not even on Lightning and he flew full-speed almost all of the time.

"Al, over here!" Astrid called and Shadow came to an abrupt halt, almost throwing me off his back. I laid over his head and groaned, "Warn me next time you do that. I wanna puke."

"Hold onto your puke." Hiccup said.

"Yeah, we have to destroy the catapults." Astrid said.

"Okay, okay. I'll puke once we get back on Berk." I groaned and sat up straight. Attempting to blow off the feeling of wanting to puke after that burst of speed and trying to settle my heart. As soon as I turned to look down at the ships beneath us, Hiccup shouted.

"That's our chance, come on!" We dove down towards the Outcast ship and a catapult launched just when Stormfly flew in front of it, she did a spin to dodge it but in the process, Astrid fell off roughly onto the Outcast ship.

"Astrid!" Hiccup and I called out before making our dragons dash over. She stood on the railing of the ship, "Hiccup! Al!"

Shadow growled and tucked his wings in close, the speed burst again but we were still too late. Alvin had grabbed Astrid's arm and tugged her to the side, I pulled on Shadow's reigns.

"You might hit Astrid!" I said, he spread his wings out and the wind pushed us back a bit. Outcasts were ready with their crossbows, Shadow growled and burst up into the air once again. He bolted after Hiccup and Toothless, flying next to them.

"You okay?" Hiccup asked, "You look kinda green."

"Astrid's in trouble right now, not me. Let's take care of her." I said and cleared my throat, "Don't fire! They have Astrid!"

Snotlout let Hookfang breathe fire towards the ship but it didn't make contact, it hit the water around it and steam rose above, hiding them from our vision slightly.

"What are you doing?" Hiccup asked.

"Alyssa said 'Fire'." Snotlout defended.

"She said \_don't\_ fire." He said.

"See? You said it this time!"

"No, he's right!" Stoic shouted.

"Thank you." Snotlout said.

"Fire again, Hiccup! All of you."

"Of course." I said, observing the steam that came up from the water.  
"Of course."

"Everyone, fire into the water!" Hiccup called out.

Barf breathed gas next to the boat, Meatlug shot a lava ball, Hookfang breathed fire all along the water, then Barf finished off with his gas and Belch finally lit it. Thick steam covered the boat.

Hiccup gave me a nod and we swept into the steam, Shadow and I passed extremely close to the boat. Toothless and Hiccup passed the other

side, we passed through again but farther away this time.

"Fire!" Alvin demanded.

"At what?" One asked.

"Everything!"

Shadow did another quick dash in front of the boat and crossbows fired rapidly, but not quite fast enough. Then our boat hit theirs, jerking it for a bit and a little roughly. Astrid hit Alvin a couple of times then took off onto the other side of the boat.

The steam cleared a bit and Toothless flew directly at Alvin, he threw him back with a swing of his head. Shadow gave a dark smirk with narrowed eyes and used a quick swing of his tail to toss Alvin aside then flew towards Astrid.

"Don't worry, Astrid. I got'cha." I said, Shadow turned a bit and I grabbed Astrid's hand, pulling her up onto Shadow's back. "You okay?" I grinned at her as Shadow

"Fine." She responded. "Are you okay? You look kinda green."

"Yeah, I'm fine." I said, "It's nothing I won't be able to handle after a while."

"Well, for now, you may want to take it slow." She informed.

We all watched the battle that ensued between Alvin and Stoic, it ended after Stoic wrung a rope around Alvin's wrists, punched him in the face and the dragon head carving snapped off into the water; pulling Alvin down with it.

Stoic pushed the Berkian boat away from the Outcasts' and leapt back over. "Now, Hiccup!" He shouted, "Now's your chance!"

The dragons dove, "Here we go, guys!" Hiccup called, "Hit 'em with everything you've got!"

Outcasts leapt off the ship as flames quickly engulfed the ship. Toothless went first, Stormfly followed, then Hookfang, Bark and Belch then Meatlug. Shadow watched them all fly away from the boat but he watched as the flames cracked then let out a devastating plasma blast, blowing up about an entire quarter of the ship's deck.

He bolted after the others and I laid over his head again, "Shadow, slow down." I moaned, "Too fast. Let's just go land on the Berkian ship." Shadow did as he was told and gently flew towards the ship, I got off and leaned over the side of it.

"What were you two thinking?" Stoic demanded when Hiccup landed as well.

"I was thinking, all we really needed to do was to get to Toothless and Shadow. And together we'd be able to make things right." Hiccup explained.

Stoic looked towards me as I still had half of my body draped over

the side of the ship, "Yeah." I hiccuped and gulped, "If you're wondering why I'm acting like this is because that speed was far too intense for me right now." I groaned again.

"Well, let's go home." Stoic said.

"All of us?" Hiccup asked and looked towards the dragons, Stoic nodded.

"All of us."

\* \* \*

><p>We were greeted by cheers when we got back to the island, louder cheers when the dragons flew over.</p>

"You hear that, guys?" Hiccup asked the Night Furies that flew side-by-side then landed on the docks. "You're back home."

"Don't cheer 'cause they're back." Mildew demanded, "Don't you remember what these beasts have done?"

"They saved our lives." Stoic answered then glared Mildew down for a brief moment then after deciding that he wasn't worth the time, he walked off.

Hiccup and I spoke up towards him next. "We may not have been able to prove what you've done but we'll never forget it." Hiccup said.

"And something else;" I looked behind me, "Shadow." He trotted up to my side and glared down at Mildew, "You may want to begin running."

"Oh, really?" Mildew asked cockily, "And why's that?"

I smirked, "Shadow, it's time for target practice."

Shadow opened his mouth up and the cranky, old battle axe took off as plasma shot at his feet and followed him for a bit then Shadow turned to me again with perked ears.

I chuckled, "Good job, boy but your aim was just a \_teeny\_ bit off." Shadow put his ears down but was inwardly jumping for joy that he actually got to fire at Mildew. "Don't worry, though. There's always tomorrow." I pat his head.

"Al, you have \_a little something\_ you may want to tell dad about." Hiccup said, I knew what he was referring to and sighed.

"I'll take care of it, I promise." I said, "Later tonight but please be there for me."

"Why wouldn't I be? You've always been there for me. It's just what we do." He grinned.

I just really hope that Stoic takes this well.

"Um, Stoic, sir?" I knocked on the door pane of the Haddock house as I walked in, "I have something that I absolutely need to discuss with you as soon as possible. It has to do with the Outcasts."

"Oh, Alyssa." Stoic said as he turned towards me from the kitchen and placed his hands on his hips. "I had my hands full before we left and now the responsibilities are beginning to fall out of them so I have to take care of those first. Do you think you could wait for a while?"

"It's kind of important." I said uneasily.

"So are a lot of the other responsibilities I have to take care of." He said.

"It's about the Outcasts." I said.

"Yes, yes. That's all nice but I really have to go." He didn't even bother to acknowledge me and left once again.

I sighed drooped my head down a bit, feeling heavier than when I went in my eyes were sadly staring at the floor until a nudge pushed me gently from the side. I looked over and found Shadow staring at me curiously, his ears slightly up.

"When'd you come back inside?" I asked and he ignored the question, nudging me again. I stroked the top of his head and sighed, "It's just that Stoic's busy right now, buddy. I came in here with the courage to tell him what went on with the Outcasts but he wouldn't listen."

Shadow tilted his head after the last part. I'd better tell him.

"My father is an Outcast." I said, Shadow pulled his head back. "I-I didn't know this until last night when we departed and I didn't know what to do. I thought I killed him!"

Shadow's head tilted and he had a skeptical look on his face, either he wasn't believing it or didn't want to. I gulped and reached a hand out, "I'd never hurt you." He slowly drew his head up and touched his nose against my hand.

"I'm sorry for holding that back for so long. I didn't want to lose you." I said, he purred sympathetically and I hugged him, he held me closely and I whispered. "Gods, I love you."

He purred in response.

"So, dad's not here?" Hiccup asked, barely coming in.

"No. The weight on my shoulders is much heavier than from when I came in." I said, my body drooping a little with my arms hanging limply at my sides.

"I'm sure that once his duties are done for the day then he'll listen to you." He said.

"Maybe but I doubt it. Man, he's gonna kick me off Berk." I sat down and cupped my hands beneath my chin, shaking my head.

"Just... try and do more things that show him that you're more trustworthy than you seem." He suggested.

"I've been by your side since we were five, bud. Protected you, cared for you, loved you, and vice-versa." I explained. "I doubt that any of that will save me now but either way, we had a good run."

"No, he has to let you stay." Hiccup kept insisting. "I don't want to lose my best friend just because of this stupid Outcast situation." His voice began to rise, he was obviously getting upset.

"What do I do in the meantime?" I asked, "There isn't much I can do, is there?"

"All we can do for now is wait." He said, lowering his voice so he sounded more sympathetic.

I sighed and pinched the bridge of my nose. I know this won't turn out well. Stoic went off pretty bad on Hiccup when he found out that he had been hiding Toothless, who knows what he'll do when he finds out about my father being an Outcast?

\* \* \*

><p>I had a large handful of Night Fury scales on the table next to me, I was piercing through them and putting them around strings or light metal rings.</p>

I was making necklaces out of the Night Fury scales because a little while ago, I found a few people picking up the scales falling off of Shadow and apparently, according to them, Night Fury scales are good luck.

I was making these for trade and handouts. When Stoic kicks me out of Berk, I should have some things that I can trade for supplies if I can't find any and sooner is always better.

I had made about four already since Shadow has been shedding all of his scales and there were about ten scales on each necklace.

Shadow was the slightest bit confused when I began to pick the scales up and began to make necklaces out of them but after I explained to him, he rose the scales above one of his eyes and groaned softly, as if trying to ask 'You really believe in that?'

"Well, Shades, you act like I have a lot of options." I said, finishing my fifth necklace. "Desperate times call for desperate measures and personally, I think this is better than going around and looting Berk."

He gave me a more understanding look then laid next to my feet as I continued to work on the necklaces, letting me do what I had to.

Hiccup walked in and furrowed his brows, "Al, you making jewelry?" He looked like he wanted to laugh. "Seriously, this is so unlike you. What's it for? Have you figured out a new niche for yourself?"

"Laugh it up while you can." I said, almost done with my sixth

necklace. "This is for when I'm sent off Berk and I have to trade for supplies. Also maybe a few handouts. So, what are you doing?"

"Well, I just came back to get a couple of tools that I left up in my room and make new stirrup for Toothless. Dad wants to learn how to ride a dragon and I thought that it may be best if he goes on Toothless." He explained.

"Shadow could give him a ride." I suggested, Shadow picked his head up and gave me look that said 'You wouldn't.'

"Sorry, Shadow but we need to keep on Stoic's good side." I said.

Shadow grumbled and turned his head away from me, after a short few seconds, he looked at Hiccup and gave a nod.

"I guess he's going to do it." I said, getting the sixth one done and setting it aside. "I'll go ahead and go while you make that new stirrup just in case things don't go... er, well, when Stoic rides Shadow."

"Okay, dad should be out near the academy by now so that's where you'll find him." Hiccup informed. "Besides, maybe he'll listen to you. He hasn't listened to me all afternoon."

"You mean like how you, him and Gobber wouldn't listen when I tried to tell you all about Hookfang's tooth?" I asked, quirking a brow.

"I said sorry." He said.

"No, you didn't." I said. "You told me that I should've said something sooner."

"Okay, Al. I'm sorry."

"It's okay. All right, let's get this done." I said and walked outside, "Shadow, you can't be in the shadows forever." He was hiding in the darker part of the kitchen and let out a grumble as he began to walk out.

\* \* \*

><p>"Alyssa, what are you doing here?" Stoic asked. "And where's Hiccup?"<p>

"Hiccup is making a new stirrup for Toothless in case you aren't comfortable with riding Shadow." I said, "Shadow can get a little... defiant or stubborn from time to time so it'll be best to have a back-up plan."

"Oh, that's understandable." Stoic said to me before confronting Shadow. "I doubt that you and I will have any problems. If I'm going to ride you, you listen to me and I control you."

Shadow's eyes narrowed and he huffed in his direction harshly, I don't know if you've noticed but unless it's me, Shadow doesn't like being told what to do. Especially if you get the slightest bit aggressive with him.

"Stoic, when dealing with dragons, especially Shadow," I gestured to him, "You need to show them that they can trust you."

"Of course he trusts me, I'm his cheif!" Stoic said, placing his hands on his hips.

Shadow huffed again.

"That isn't really what I meant." I said.

"Is he giving me attitude?" Stoic asked, pointing at Shadow since he was staring him down.

"Well, as I said, trust is essential. It's pretty simple, too. Just give me your hand."

Stoic looked down at my outstretched hand and rolled his eyes, "I didn't come here to hold hands, Alyssa."

I sighed and grabbed his hand, pulling it gently towards Shadow, he growled softly.

"Shades, it's okay, bud." I said soothingly, "It's just fine."

His growling stopped and he put his head near Stoic's hand, not quite touching it. He grumbled a little and looked at me, pretty unsure until I gave him a small nod. His nose touched Stoic's hand and I let go.

"Do you feel it?" I asked Stoic and he pulled his hand back.

"Yep. Still dry and scaly." He said.

"That's not what I meant." I said quietly.

Shadow huffed again.

"I'm pretty sure he's giving me attitude." Stoic said, this time more sure of himself.

"He's just cranky, more than likely because of any lack of sleep that could have occurred to him on Dragon Island." I hoped that sounded believable.

"Can I get on him now?" Stoic asked impatiently.

I bit my lip a bit then grinned as I stepped aside for him to get on Shadow who didn't look pleased about this situation one bit. Stoic stepped around and examined Shadow a bit and got on.

"All right, let's get on with this, dragon." He said.

I got on behind and held on, if Shadow doesn't listen to him then he'll listen to me.

"Let's start off nice and slow. Just give him a little nudge." I said, Stoic roughly kicked Shadow in the shoulder, making him growl loudly and sent him bolting off into the air. "I said nudge!" I called over the wind.

"That was my nudge!" He responded.

"Next time tap!"

Shadow shook himself around and growled furiously, he made it clear that he didn't like being hit so roughly. He flew towards the water and growled further, speeding up the closer we got to the water.

"Up, dragon!" Stoic demanded but Shadow slapped an ear in his direction, getting himself smacked in the back of the head which only upset him further. He dove into the water and shook ferociously, I pat his side and he looked back with slit eyes that softened and he flew back up out of the water.

"What's wrong with this dragon of yours?" Stoic asked.

I shrugged, "He's not used to other people riding him so he won't listen very well the first time around."

"How come these reigns don't work?" He asked.

"Well, the reigns don't have much function in the riding but he'll usually listen if I tell him to go somewhere and pull them in that direction." I said then thought, what have I done?

Stoic pulled the reigns back and Shadow began to fly upside down then down for the water again but there was a rock in the way.

"Stoic, we're heading for a rock!" I stated the obvious.

"Stop distracting me and maybe that won't happen!" He demanded.

Shadow pursed his lips and turned away from the rock on his own accord, he flew towards another rock because of Stoic's 'steering' he began to spiral.

"Left! Left!" The spiraling got worse, "No, the other left!" I said.

Shadow was rammed into a rock and growled harshly.

"Dragon's fault." Stoic said.

"Gonna blame that on the dragon, too?" I asked sarcastically, referring to the rock ramming.

"Yep." He responded.

Shadow shook himself again, growled fiercely, began to scrape part of his back up against a rock and actually turned to bite Stoic's hand. Okay, this is just disasterous.

"Look out." I said and pulled one of Stoic's hands away from Shadow's jaws. He began to dive directly for the water once again, he wanted Stoic off and there wasn't a thing to change his mind.

"Up!" I said, we got closer to the water and I braced for the icy impact once again but Stoic pulled up roughly on the reigns, getting

another growl from Shadow.

"See that?" Stoic asked.

"Yeah but the real question is, how do you plan on keeping this up?" I asked.

"There's a beach there." He said, "I'll land."

"You're coming in too hard." I said, "You have to slow down."

"I'm trying!" He said, pulling on the reigns again but even if Shadow did listen, it wouldn't have been a pretty landing anyway.

We crashed on the beach and we each landed in our own direction. I ended up going to the right and landing on my back, Stoic was tossed straight ahead, and Shadow rolled perfectly away from the scene and huffed harshly.

He walked towards me and narrowed his eyes.

"I am so sorry." I whispered.

Shadow's eyes softened and he pulled me up by the back of the cloak.

"Thank you." I said and dusted myself off then looked at Stoic as he did the same and began to walk off. "Pardon but where are you going?"

"I'm done with this, Alyssa. I've got a village to look after." He said.

Shadow smirked as he watched him walk away but after Stoic saw that there was no way out, he turned back to us, sighed and said "I'll need a ride home."

Shadow's face fell.

\* \* \*

><p>We flew over the ocean again, more or less dried off now. Shadow was happy that I was back in command and Stoic was only a passenger, he made that clear.</p>

"This isn't the way home." Stoic pointed out.

Shadow rolled his eyes as I said "I know but you should just sit back and enjoy the ride. We're taking the scenic route."

"Right now, my lunch is taking the scenic route into my throat." He responded.

Shadow looked absolutely disgusted and groaned.

"Please keep your lunch and other stomach contents inside of your body at all times." I said, Shadow groaned again. "On another note, think about how much easier cheifing would be if you were on the back of a dragon."

"Well, I prefer to be down on the—" He began to retaliate but noticed something, "Wait, what's going on over there?" He asked as we flew over a yak farm. "Some genious has been yak tipping again."

I saw two figures hid behind a cart and said "It appears to the Thorston twins." Shadow fired at the cart and flew over them.

"Looks like you're right so make that \_geniouses\_." Stoic grumbled. "I want every one of those yaks back on its feet!"

"Nice cheifing." I praised, "Let's see what else we can get done."

As we flew there were a few boars eating at some crops, Shadow fired at them but hit none. The boars all took off running and Shadow smirked.

"Fire again, dragon." Stoic said, Shadow growled in response.

"Stoic, the boars are gone."

>I said, stating the obvious once again.<p>

"Who cares? I like the sound it makes." He said.

I patted Shadow's head, "Well, one more can't hurt, can it?"

Shadow groaned and fired into the air, making another plasma blast.

"Shades, take us up. There's something else we need to show our cheif." I said, Shadow groaned in irritation but flew up anyway.

We broke over the top of the gray clouds and a bright sunlight that made the clouds turn many shades of yellow and pink met our eyes. It made it all the more worthwhile to see after we saw maybe four or five shooting stars.

We broke beneath the clouds again and we got to see more of the sunset; purple, pink, orange stretched over the sky and tinted the clouds around it and reflection off the icy waters. We got a nice, clear vision of Berk and I grinned.

"I spent my entire life on Berk." Stoic began, "Climbed its hills, explored its forests, swam its waters; I travled every inch but I never thought I'd see it like this."

"It's beautiful, isn't it?" I asked as I never grew tired of marveling Berk's sunsets.

"No, it's more than that, Alyssa." He gestured to the homes below us, "Look at them; all of my people. Everyone is safe. It's a good feeling." He said.

I felt guilt twinge inside of me because of what I still had to tell him. I pondered on wether I should tell him now or later. Sooner is better but this is sort of a moment for us. Oh, Gods, what do I do?

"Back home we go." I chuckled and not long after, we landed in front

of the Haddock house.

"Sure enough, it's been a long day so what do you say we get some rest?" Stoic said and I opened my mouth to tell him what I had to but shut up and nodded.

\* \* \*

><p>I thought a nudge or something would wake me up in the morning, a lick to the face but no, I was waken up by something <em>entirely<em> different. Growling and roaring.

I shot awake and looked around, not seeing anything; I realized that it was coming from outside. I ran out and Shadow was pulling away from Stoic's grasp around his saddle.

"That all you got, dragon!?" He ordered and Shadow barked at him, nipping at his hand roughly.

"Stoic, what are you doing?" I asked.

"Well, your dragon's got spunk and a lot of it." He said. "If you know me, which you do, you know that I like spunk. The more, the better."

Shadow laid his ears against his head and growled deeply, he bucked away from Stoic and got into a fighting stance. He was not fooling around, he was ready to fight.

"Shadow, no." I said sharply but it wasn't deterring him, he was still bent on getting to Stoic.

"Oh, another fight? Why not? I've got the time." Stoic said, ready to fight.

"Another fight?" I asked.

"We've been fighting all morning." He explained as Shadow leapt and pinned him to the ground, "Like I said; \_spunk\_!"

Shadow bit at Stoic's arm and was thrown to the side a bit, he shook the blow off and ran at him again; ready to do much more damage but Stoic grabbed hold of his head and clamped his jaws shut, he pinned him to the ground.

"Okay, what?" I asked, very frustrated and upset that this had been going on all morning. "We discussed yesterday that dragons need trust and so far, he isn't trusting you."

"What are you talking about? We're bonding right now." He said and Shadow broke free from his hold and threw him off, shaking himself again and roaring as Stoic ran back for him.

Shadow dove for him but Stoic had rolled out of the way and afterwards, climbed onto his back. Shadow growled deeply and flew straight into the air, he came back down and tried to hit Stoic off by ramming into rooftops when he saw that that didn't work, he landed roughly on the ground on his back and rolled harshly.

"See? This is what I like!" Stoic gave a hearty laugh as Shadow hit

his side against a wall and barked loudly as the cheif refused to let go.

"Do I even want to know what's going on here?" Hiccup asked and I shook my head.

"No. Not really." I said.

"We're bonding!" Stoic repeated as he tugged Shadow's reigns back and they fell off a cliff.

We watched in silence for them to come back up. Toothless had the scales above his eyes furrowed and he grumbled questioningly. After maybe a minute, they still didn't come back up over the cliff.

"Well, Al, it's time to find you another dragon." Hiccup said, "What do you think about a Deadly Nadder?"

Then Shadow came back over the cliff and shook himself off, he looked exhausted and Stoic kept insisting on riding him.

"Shadow is getting the flap beat out of him and Stoic as well. I don't know how to stop this or what do to." I said to Hiccup quietly.

Shadow's eyelids were falling, his legs shaking and he seemed to have plenty of cuts and bruises but Stoic looked even worse. A lot of both of their cuts were most likely going to leave scars.

Shadow flew tiredly to my side and attempted to hide behind me, he stared at Stoic with large eyes and whimpered softly.

Hold on, what happened to that attitude of his? He was growling at him only seconds ago and now he's hiding from him.

His falling eyelids trembled a bit and he fell to the ground, his eyes shutting for a moment.

"Shadow!" I exclaimed and knelt to him.

"Oh, don't worry about him. He's just resting up for our next flight \_and\_ our next fight." Stoic pounded a fist into his palm enthusiastically.

Shadow cracked open an eye and groaned softly, he was done. He was tired, he was sick of the fighting, he was simply done but he made it obvious that he would still fight if he had to and considering that Stoic was still around, he would if he didn't leave.

"I am so sorry." I said softly, he groaned again but showed me apologetic eyes. He's forgiven me but I haven't. What could I have done to prevent this?

"Dad, I got the stirrup done. If you want, you can ride Toothless." Hiccup said, holding up the stirrup.

"Thanks for the offer, Hiccup but Shadow seems to be like my type of dragon." Stoic put his hands on his hips. "Same time tomorrow?"

Shadow rolled his eyes and let out another tired groan.

"How about five in the afternoon?" He asked, "My schedual is very open today."

Shadow roared fiercely but his eyes widened in pain and he shook his head. He was pushing himself; too hard and too much. He didn't want Stoic on his back and that's how he wanted to keep it.

"Okay." Stoic grinned, taking that as a yes.

Shadow was breathing deeply and a few of the cuts on him reopened, his glare kept on Stoic became more intense each second and he was ready to pounce again once he had the chance but I place a hand on the side of his head.

He groaned and his eyes softened again, I leaned over and kissed him next to his eye next to a small cut that if it was an inch closer, would have blinded him.

My breathing got more rapid as I knew who did this, I knew who was responsible and I knew who needed punishment but I couldn't do it. Not unless I wanted to get kicked out of Berk while my dragon was tired and injured.

"Shadow, I'll take care of you." I said then looked up at Hiccup, "Could you go and get me some herbs please, Hic? I don't want these wounds to get infected or anything."

"Sure thing." He took off inside to get some herbs and I pet Shadow again, he groaned softly once again and watched Stoic walk away. He began to charge up plasma and Toothless stood in front of him, shaking his head.

Shadow growled then winced in pain again, Toothless looked at all of the cuts and bruises. He came closer and began to lick away at the cuts on Shadow's body, causing him to jerk a bit at first but relax soon enough to the comforting action.

Hiccup came back out with the herbs and noticed Toothless cleaning his fellow Night Fury's wounds. He got wide-eyed for a moment but handed me the herbs that I wasted no time in applying after Toothless had cleaned the cuts.

When I was done, Toothless brushed his nose against Shadow's and he purred at him. Shadow grinned then laid his head back down, shutting his eyes to rest.

\* \* \*

><p>"How's Shadow holding up?" Hiccup asked, looking down at Shadow sprawled out on the ground and resting rather peacefully.</p>

"I don't know." I answered, "He's been sleeping most of the day."

"A fight with dad'll do that." He said. "He should consider himself lucky, things could have gotten ugly fast."

"Who? My dragon or your father?"

"Both."

My eyes averted back to Shadow who was now cracking open his eyes and shaking himself awake, he looked over his cuts that were covered in the herbs and gave a self-disappointed stare towards me then looked at the ground, laying his ears against his head.

"Shadow, it wasn't anything to worry about." I reassured but he put his back towards me without making a noise. I got up and rubbed the top of his head, "In my opinion, you're still the best."

He jerked away from me and covered his face with his wings, he didn't want anyone looking at him.

He was ashamed.

"You don't have to be ashamed." I said. "You're great just the way you are."

He didn't move.

"Al, just... leave him alone for a bit." Hiccup said quietly. "I bet he's pretty exhausted after this morning."

Stoic burst through the door, "How's our cheif's strong, young man?"

"Well, he's not talking to me." Hiccup muttered.

Shadow who growled at Stoic as he asked "How about you and I go for a ride?"

Shadow laid his ears against his head in irritation. He wasn't ready for another ride and I don't think he'll ever be unless he gets to ram Stoic into more rocks.

"Good, because I need a ride to help the Jorgenson break down a fence. I just came home to get my hatchet." He said.

Hiccup saw the look on my face then called after him, "Uh, dad? You need to understand that Shadow is--"

"You're right, Hiccup. I could just use one of Shadow's fireballs." He said then reached for Shadow.

Shadow got up and walked away from him, baring his teeth.

"Shadow, I know that you're in pain right now but you're the only one Stoic'll ride. Come on, please. It'll be the best for both of us." I said.

Shadow considered what I said and rolled his eyes, turning his side towards Stoic and lowering himself to the ground.

"Ha, now that's more I like it." Stoic said and led him outside, got on and flew off.

I sighed and shook my head. Worry consumed me; not just because of me still not being able to tell Stoic about Slade but about Shadow, he

wasn't going to stop defying Stoic or show him mercy while flying.

Toothless walked over to me and hit his nose against my arm gently to get my attention, I looked down at him and he gave a gummy smile. I laughed, it had been so long since I'd seen that but it didn't erase my worry.

"Look, you have a back-up buddy." Hiccup remarked as I pet Toothless across his head.

I didn't respond as I was trying to keep myself content. Toothless laid his head on my lap and rested his head there, I laid an arm over him and continued to pet him.

"Thanks, Toothless. I need the comfort." I said, he purred.

## 15. How To Pick Your Dragon Pt 2

**\*\*BloodBendingDancer:** I know. I feel so bad but I promise that things will get better for him after a while.\*\*

It was now late in the day and no trace of Stoic and Shadow anywhere, I was getting worried. Astrid, Hiccup and Toothless were all around me for comfort as we all sat out on the steps not too far from the Haddock house.

"You're not upset that Stoic's been gone with your dragon all day?" Astrid asked.

"Yeah, I'm upset but whatever keeps us on Stoic's good side." I said without thinking, still looking through the sky.

"Huh? Since when have you cared about that?" She asked.

"Since her and dad have gotten along so well when the Outcasts invaded." Hiccup covered up. "She wants to keep it that way."

Astrid didn't seem to believe him but left it at that.

I saw Shadow land with Stoic on his back in front of the Haddock house, I looked closely for any new cuts or bruises but there were none. Shadow looked exhausted once again and his eyelids began to fall again.

"Look at that." Hiccup said. "That's what it looks like to be ridden all day by a 400-pound man."

"Yeah, this really isn't helping." I said.

"At least you guys got him on a dragon." Astrid said.

"Well, now we need to find a way to get him off of one." I said.

Shadow saw me and flew up towards me, landing on the ground in front of me and lying by my feet. He picked his head up and laid it on my lap, groaning and brushing against me.

"I am so sorry." I said and he just continued to rub against me.

"Why don't you guys give him the old 'honey and the hatchet'?" She suggested.

Hiccup quirked a brow and I did the same as we got up and began to walk, Shadow following behind rather quietly.

"You know; tell him something he wants to hear, that's the honey part then you hit him in the head with something he doesn't." She punched me in the arm, "You know, the hatchet."

"Why does your advice always involve weapons?" Hiccup asked with a grin.

She didn't give a verbal response, only grinning in return.

"One problem; I'm not good with comforting people." I explained. "And I know that I'm going to have to be the one to do it since it is my dragon and let's face it, when it comes to complimenting people and stuff like that, I'm not the best for it."

\* \* \*

><p>"Shadow!" Stoic called, "Shadow!" He looked down at me, "Alyssa, where's Shadow?"</p>

Shadow hid in the darker parts of the house, glaring down at Stoic and ready to pounce at any second. Hiccup nudged my elbow with his and cleared his throat.

"I don't have a clue." I lied. "But have you done something with your beard? It looks really... radiant and-"

"Enough with the honey." He put a hand up to silence me. "Just give me the hatchet."

I took a deep breath, "Stoic, you can't ride Shadow and, uh... bond with him like you've been doing." I hope I picked the right hatchet. "He's my dragon and he's been looking pretty exhausted lately."

Stoic put his hands on his hips and sighed, "Fair enough, so find me one."

"Wait, what?" I asked, there was no way that it was just that easy.

"Find me a dragon as good as Shadow, that shouldn't be too hard for the heads of the Dragon Training Academy." He said.

\* \* \*

><p>"The finest dragon species on the island." Hiccup introduced, "And they're all represented right here at this academy."</p>

Snotlout came up first, "But the Monstorous Nightmare is the only one with brawn and prestige for men of our stature."

Stoic made his way for Hookfang, "Feel the Monsterous Nightmare difference." Snotlout said. "On a cold, winter night; its whole body heats up just enough to keep you toasty."

Stoic got on Hookfang. "Let me warm it up for ya." Snotlout said and flicked Hookfang and the dragon turned a bright shade of red, heating up and smoke began to emit from Stoic's behind.

"GAH!" He shouted then ran off of Hookfang and into the dragon's drinking water, resting his steaming rump from the heat it just endured.

"Now, should I put you down for one?" Snotlout asked. "They come in an assortment of colors."

Stoic glared then was introduced to the Deadly Nadder.

"Just because she's beautiful doesn't mean she's not tough." Astrid began, "But you should never underestimate me." Stormfly growled. "Uh, her. Uh, us." She stuttered a bit.

"Well, she is a beauty." Stoic said, placing a hand on Stormfly's nose roughly.

"B-Be careful with the-"

Stoic was thrown back by Stormfly's tail and spikes flew at him, he was backed against a wall and the spikes landed all around him.

"Monsterous Nightmare is looking a little better now, huh, cheif?" Snotlout asked.

"Snotlout, his decision. Not yours." I said.

"I know, I just want to make sure he picks the right one." He said and I rolled my eyes.

"Next." Stoic ordered.

Next was the Zippelback; the twins were fighting and their easily influenced dragons began to fight, too. Barf breathed gas and Belch lit it, it made an explosion and their faces and parts of their neck were covered in ash.

"Next!" Stoic ordered.

Fishlegs was introducing the Gronckle. "I tell that what you're really looking for is loyalty. A dragon who will be there for you no matter what. The last face you see at night and the first face you see in the morning. Warming your bed when it's cold outside, a shoulder to cry on when the world has turned its back on you." His voice cracked. "How could you not love a Gronckle?" He hugged Meatlug.

"Sorry, son but I'm looking for a dragon; not a mother." Stoic said then turned to Hiccup and I as we unfolded our arms from the display that had just happened. "I haven't seen anything that can hold a candle to a Night Fury."

"Well, us neither." Hiccup said, "But Toothless and Shadow are the only Night Furies Berk and they're ours."

"Stoic, another boat is being attacked!" Gobber called. "It's that rouge dragon again."

"Rouge dragon?" I asked, oblivious to the situation.

"Oh, there's this rouge dragon has been stealing fish from our boats and dad's refused to do anything about it so far because he wouldn't get on a dragon and now he doesn't want to get off of it." Hiccup explained, gesturing to Shadow.

"Well, let's go." Stoic said and began to heft a leg up to get on Shadow as I did the same. He gave a glare down towards me and I stepped back, letting him get in front and getting settled in the back.

"At least he blocks the wind." Hiccup whispered to me.

"The wind's one of the best parts." I complained.

Hiccup, Toothless, Shadow, Stoic and I flew towards where the boat was and saw a Thunderdrum, he was a big one too.

"I don't believe it; a Thunderdrum." Hiccup said, "They say he gets his power from Thor himself."

The Thunderdrum flew away from the boat and Shadow growled, ready to dash for it despite his injured condition.

"Shadow, shoot a fireball. Let him know that we mean business." He said, Shadow didn't oblige.

"Plasma blast, Shades." I said, he fired at the sun and growled at the Thunderdrum again that was now flying for us, roaring at us loudly.

Toothless fired this time but the Thunderdrum shut his mouth then turned off to the side, diving into the water. Shadow growled more ferociously as we landed on the ship. All of us got off the dragons.

"I think we've scared him off but we've got to get everyone out of here." Hiccup said.

"Come on, lads. Let's get back to shore." Stoic said, "We'll have no more!"

The Thunderdrum's tail wrapped around Stoic and pulled him in the water. We all leaned over to look for him, not seeing anything for a bit.

"No more what?!" Bucket called.

"Dad!" Hiccup called.

"Uh, Stoic can swim, right?" Mulch asked.

"Yeah, he swam in the fight with the Red Death. He should still be able to swim." I said.

Shadow didn't particularly like Stoic on his back or fighting with him but he made it obvious that he'd be willing to protect him because he was ready to leap into the water.

He would have, too, if Stoic and the Thunderdrum didn't come up onto the boat. Stoic wrestled it for a bit. "Oh, he's a fighter!" He said and punched it in the face. It pounced at him after he shouted, "He's got spunk!" He grabbed a nearby rope and threw it over the Thunderdrum. "This is the one, you two! I've found my dragon! Now all you have to do is train him for me."

I cocked a brow, Shadow let out a sigh of relief, Toothless blinked, Hiccup had wide eyes, Mulch watched with a gaping mouth and Bucket dropped his oar to the deck. In other words, we were in absolute shock and Shadow looked pretty happy for himself but pitifully at the tied Thunderdrum.

\* \* \*

><p>"Sorry about the muzzle." Hiccup apologized to the Thunderdrum in the cage that we had put him in. By 'we' I mean Bucket, Mulch and Stoic.</p>

"All right, let's get me on his back. Time's a-wasting." Stoic said, placing his hands on his hips.

"First, we have to get one in his size." Hiccup commented and I turned away to snicker, Shadow put a paw up to cover his face from Stoic's sight.

"What was that?" Stoic asked.

"Nothing." Hiccup defended while grinning. "Look, you have to approach him properly, dad. Especially a dragon like this, he is one of the most powerful dragons I've ever seen."

"That's why I picked him. They say his roar gets its power from Thor himself."

"So I've heard." Hiccup's eyes rolled. "But still, you have to let the dragon know you're a friend."

"Friend, huh?" Stoic pondered a bit. "Like me and Gobber?"

"Yeah, perfect." Hiccup nodded.

"Yeah, now how did you two meet?" I asked then regretted it.

Stoic pulled me into a headlock and rubbed a fist roughly against my head, my arms flew up around the one around my neck and began to pull. "That's my wife you're talking to, you one-legged lout!"

He let me go and I put a hand around my neck, "Um, ow." I said and Hiccup attempted to ignore what he just saw.

"Not exactly the approach I had in mind." Hiccup commented and I nodded towards him.

"You and I, both." I removed my hand from my neck and sighed.

"Dad, what's important is that you need to let him know that he can trust you." He said. "You have to make eye contact."

"Uh-huh. Sure." Stoic said.

Hiccup made a gesture for me to pull the lever to the cage which I did without a second thought. The Thunderdrum slowly stepped out and walked towards Stoic, teeth still being bared.

"Now stay calm and be gentle." Hiccup informed. "You know you've formed a bond when he bows his head to let you climb on his back."

Stoic reached a hand out for the Thunderdrum's nose without much thought, making the dragon snap his jaws and almost tear his hand off. Stoic pulled back before he did and looked his hand over then looked back angrily at the Thunderdrum and punched him back into the cage.

"Whoa!" I called out.

"Hey, what happened to trust?" Hiccup asked alarmed.

"Tell that to him!" Stoic responded. "He's the one who tried to take off my hand!"

"You can't just punch dragons willy-nilly." I said, "Why else would Shadow be so reluctant to let you ride him?"

"Eh, he's just upset that I won our last fight." Stoic waved off and Shadow growled, pursing his lips back.

The Thunderdrum flew back out of the cage and past Stoic, he grabbed his tail to stop him from flying off and planted his heels into the ground. He was making this harder than it had to be.

"Dad, would you stop?" Hiccup asked.

"We've been over this before, it's not bonding. This is some sort of dominance act." I commented.

"Yeah, you've got to show these beasts who's boss." He said, threw the Tidal dragon to the ground and leapt on his back.

"Exactly as I was saying." I said and pressed a hand to my forehead. "This is going nowhere."

"Look at that; I'm on his back." Stoic looked back at Hiccup and I. "Any questions?" He flew the Thunderdrum upside-down and it flew in a few sloppy spins around the academy before heading out.

"Oh, too many to ask." Hiccup said.

Shadow looked pitifully at the Thunderdrum, knowing pretty much what he's going through and sighed.

\* \* \*

><p>"The last necklace is done." I said, finishing up with the eleventh necklace and placing it next to the others. "Hiccup, want a handout? It's free and supposed good luck."</p>

He was too busy speaking to Gobber as he was working on a Gronckle's mouth. He was pacing a bit behind the working man as he continued to speak.

"I talk to him but my dad just doesn't listen. It's like I'm wasting my breath." He said, frustrated.

"I've got it." Gobber said and pulled his head out of the Gronckle's mouth.

"Thank you, at least somebody understands me." Hiccup said relieved.

"No, I mean this; nasty." Gobber said, gesturing to the tooth he pulled from the Gronckle's mouth.

I sighed and looked down at the necklace, "He never asked me if my father ever listened to a word I say. Well, I guess he doesn't really have to ask since he already knows. Whoa, Stoic! What happened to you?"

He was scratched up and bruised, almost as bad as when he fought Shadow but I guess that two days in a row just pushed his limit.

"Gah, the beast threw me off and flew off to Thor knows where." He said as Hiccup rushed to his side to aide him.

"Well, can you blame him? All you ever did was fight him." Hiccup pointed out.

"And that was only for about a couple of hours." I added and put the necklaces away in my satchel.

"Nah, he loved it! I know Shadow did, too. Look, he wants to go again, right now." He pointed at Shadow, he was glaring at him then growled when he was mentioned.

"Apparently not." Hiccup said.

"Certainly not." I added and Shadow narrowed his eyes further.

"Look, does he look like he likes fighting?" Hiccup asked and gestured to Shadow.

"Considering how long we went yesterday, he seemed just fine with it." Stoic said and I slapped a palm to my forehead. "Now, we can stand here arguing or we can go get my dragon." Stoic walked off.

Hiccup looked at me and I shrugged, we both let out a sigh and followed Stoic.

\* \* \*

><p>Shadow was pouty faced that Stoic was on his back once again and kept grumbling and growling. I told Stoic to get on Toothless but nooo, he kept insisting on riding Shadow.</p>

"We need to fan out and cover every part of the island." Stoic ordered.

"Ruffnut and Tuffnut, you take-" Hiccup began but his father cut him off.

"You take the West side."

"You got it, cheif." Tuffnut said.

"Can anyone even see me over here?" Hiccup asked.

"Hi, Hiccup." I said.

"Al." Hiccup rolled his eyes, "Not now, okay?"

"All righty then." I said and looked ahead.

"West side!" Stoic shouted at the twins since they didn't go anywhere and the Zippleback bolted away immediately. "Snotlout, you take the West side."

Him and Hookfang flew off without hesitation.

"Come on, Fishlegs, we'll take the East side." Astrid said.

"But it's allergy season." He muttered nervously.

"Fishlegs." Astrid said sternly.

"It's not me, it's her." He patted the side of Meatlug's head and the two flew off.

"Your friends are an odd bunch but they sure know what they're doing on those dragons." Stoic complimented.

Hiccup and I looked at each other, not sure which one he was talking to, we both shrugged.

"Thank you, I guess." Hiccup spoke up.

And only a few minutes later, he spoke up again. "Okay, when we find the dragon, you might want to think about approaching him... differently. Like Shadow, he obviously doesn't like being pushed around so-"

"There he is!" Stoic called and pointed towards the Thunderdrum that just entered a den.

"And once again, not a word got through." Hiccup sighed.

We dove for the Thunderdrum's den and landed. We got off to see him rushing out and lashing out at us. Toothless stood on defense until Hiccup soothed him.

Shadow remained looking pitifully at the dragon, seeing how the muzzle was still on him and how Stoic had been beating him. He didn't look like he wanted to attack him in the least.

"Let me handle this. This dragon's mine." Stoic pulled out a hammer and walked towards the Thunderdrum.

"Dad." Hiccup called but went unheard.

I saw something that shocked me a bit, a hurt Thunderdrum that was hiding in the shadows. There was a large scorch mark on his wing and he looked afraid, the wing was nestled closely to himself.

"Hey, would you look at that?" Stoic asked, I guess he saw the Thunderdrum too.

"He's hurt." I said. "There's a burn on his wing."

"Why he- he's protecting his friend." Stoic said. "That's why he's been taking all those fish. Go get the others and tell Gobber to get ready."

"We can't just leave you here." Hiccup objected.

"Go!" Stoic ordered more firmly.

Hiccup and I got on our dragons and rode, I was getting the others and Hiccup was going to get Gobber.

When we all got to Stoic, though, the Thunderdrum had his muzzle removed and Stoic was on his back.

"What happened?" Hiccup asked.

"Battled a few boars, did a little bonding." He answered.

"You?" Hiccup and I asked in unison. It shocked the both of us.

"There's something you two should know about dragons; it's all about trust." Stoic said.

"So you actually heard that?" Hiccup grinned.

"Yes, I just said it." He chuckled. "I listen."

\* \* \*

><p>We got the Thunderdrum back to Berk on a stretched out piece of cloth that was being carried by our dragons, we set it down gently and let the cloth go.</p>

"Take good care of him. He's a friend." Stoic said.

I sighed with relief that the Thunderdrum was okay then sighed in irritation as the nagging voice in my head kept screaming at me to tell Stoic about the Outcasts.

I don't know when I can anymore. I'll have to figure it out or make the time for it, I guess.

## 16. Portrait of Hiccup as a Buff Young Man

\*\*Guys, I am so sorry about the lack of updating but a lot has been going on. I didn't have any internet connection and a few other things including a tragic death that hit me hard. Cory Monteith. It kind of messed up my writing a bit and I apologize if the next few chapters are terrible but bear with me, okay?\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Good morning, Stoic, my friend." I greeted after coming into the great hall. "So, how do you think the picture turned out?"<p>

"Oh, Alyssa, Bucket surely did an amazing job on the picture." He patted my shoulder roughly but I was rather used to it unlike Hiccup.

"Wait. Bucket?" I asked inquisitively.

"Yep, turns out that he's quite the artist." He patted my shoulder again. "Oh, it's time. Hold onto your boots, it's going to be a good one." He left after that.

"Hold onto my boots? That's new." I said; regarding the phrase he'd just used.

Stoic had an arm around Hiccup as they stood in front of the whole village, Hiccup was pretty excited to say the least. Stoic pulled Hiccup towards him just a bit closer as Bucket was about to unveil the painting.

"Here it comes, son." He said. "This is our legacy."

Bucket finally revealed the picture that was... not what I expected. Okay, I hated it. I felt like burning it.

The village gasped and compared the small Hiccup they saw to the one in the picture; big and buff.

I saw Hiccup's beaming face fall into a confused look then his eyes widened, he approached it and narrowed his eyes.

Then there was Ruffnut in the corner of my eye, she seemed to be gushing a bit in adoration.

"Whoa." Tuffnut gasped, "What happened to Hiccup?" He tilted his head in confusion.

"Who cares?" Astrid asked, she was pretty much breathless and her face beamed as she kept more of her composure than Ruffnut did.

"I do." I said defensively. "That isn't Hiccup."

"It's a father-son picture. Of course it's Hiccup." Astrid gestured and folded her arms once again; still being entranced by the picture.

"That isn't who I grew up with. That's some... buff dork like

Snotlout."

"Hey!" Snotlout said; offended.

"I mean, why would it be so bad to draw Hiccup like he is? I mean, I love him that way. I don't see why the rest of you like the picture more than the real thing."

I got my answer.

"That's not me." Hiccup said.

"Sure, it is." Stoic said, "It's you but, you know, bigger, stronger."

"Now, \_that's \_the son of a cheif." Mulch said, clanging his mug together with Stoic's.

"See what I mean?" Stoic asked a hurt looking Hiccup.

So... it's just because he didn't \_look\_ like the son of a cheif? Really? I'll give them a piece of my mind. So, I rolled a sleeve up and began to walk towards the front of the great hall.

\_Just because he isn't what you wanted doesn't give you the right to hurt him and destroy his image. It's what makes him special. Well, to me, it does. I don't know about you.\_

"Stoic! I demand a word with you!" I said and made my way up for him.

"What is it?" He asked, lowering his mug and wiping his mouth a bit.

"This painting; it's a disgrace." I snarled.

"Bucket worked very hard on this portrait, I think he deserves a little respect."

"I don't want to hear it. This isn't who he is and I don't know about you but I like how he is now. He's perfect how he is now. Whether he's your \_perfect cheif's son\_ or not, that picture is not of Hiccup. It's of a fake." I said each word with venom. "If you can't accept him for how he is now, there must truly be something wrong with you."

"Al, just leave it alone." Hiccup said from the side.

"Why?" I asked, "Just because you let them do these things to you doesn't mean that I'm just going to stand by and watch. You're precious to me and I'll protect you by all means. You should know that by now." My voice and glare softened as I kept speaking to him.

"Alyssa, you're overreacting. It's just a painting." Stoic tried to be level-headed but I wasn't having any of it.

"'Just a painting?' 'Just a painting?!'" My voice began to rise again.

"Oh, gods, here we go." Hiccup said quietly and a bit nervously.

I would have continued but all eyes were up here still, not just staring at me but Hiccup as well. The silence in the room was deafening as all eyes began to shift towards Hiccup.

Great, he feels bad and now I'm making him feel worse.

"All I ever do is screw things up." I shook my head and ran through the field of Vikings and out of the door.

All I ever do is screw things up.

I try to help Hiccup and end up making things worse.

Wow! Now that's a shocker, isn't it?

"Al!" He called.

I didn't want to face him after embarrassing him in front of the whole village. Gods, he probably wants to tell me off.

"Al, wait up." He said.

Fine, whatever he has to say to me, I deserve it.

I stopped and turned around to face him, "Just say 'It's all your fault' and get it over with." I said then shut my eyes, waiting to punched or something, I suppose.

I heard him stop in front of me, "Al, I wasn't going to say that."

"You were thinking it."

"No, I wasn't. Listen, I'm glad that you stood up for me, truly, I am." He began then I thought, Here comes the bad part.

"Why would I say that to you? You're my best friend on the island other than Toothless, that is. All you wanted to do was to... what's a good way to put this? Help." He said. "Open your eyes and look at me, please."

I sighed and refused to make eye contact.

"If you say so." I looked at him and rose an eyebrow.

"Al, you've been there for me, all these years and I don't know why I thought you'd stop. Especially when you saw the picture. I sometimes forget how much you're so fond of me." He laughed a bit at the end but I didn't find anything funny.

"So... even though I'm a one-legged Hiccup, I'm perfect to you?" He asked as he was very unsure of himself. That picture must have really gotten to him.

I thought for a moment then hugged him. "Of course, Hiccup." I grinned and began to run a hand through his hair. "Why wouldn't you be?"

"Al, you may or may not want to take a few steps to the side or duck." Hiccup said suddenly.

I let him go, "Why is that?"

Something tackled me to the ground.

"That's why." He said.

I rolled over just to meet a slimy dragon's tongue. "Shadow, what was that for?" I groaned, trying to sit up but being held down by his large paws made that kind of difficult.

"Al, as you've told me before when Shadow 'accidentally' stepped on me, it's an act of playfulness." Hiccup said.

I laughed as my dragon gave another lick with his forked tongue and he finally let me up, I wiped the saliva off with my sleeve and looked at Hiccup.

He let out a sigh then began to speak. "Dad likes that picture better than the real me. I mean, think about it; even my name, you know it's Viking tradition to call the runt of the litter a Hiccup."

As if to prove his point, one of our fellow Vikings was passing by with his sheep. He turned around and patted his legs, "Come on, little Hiccup."

A very small lamb jumped into his arms and he looked towards Hiccup. "Oh, hey, Hiccup."

Hiccup and I watched him walk away then he turned back to me, "See? What do I have to do to get my father to accept me?"

"Well, I'm sure he does accept you but him being the cheif and all, he just has a hard time being able to show it. And being a Hiccup isn't so bad." I said.

"Oh, really? And why's that?" He asked; depressed.

"Well, I can't say about other Vikings what I can say about you." I grinned.

"Alyssa, do you know where Hiccup went?" Stoic asked after jabbing my shoulder to further get my attention. "I can't find the lad anywhere."

"No clue." I said honestly and rubbed Shadow's back; emitting a purr from him and a slight cuddle. "He left me to go talk to the other teens earlier and now that I think about it; their dragons are gone, too. So that means that they're either out doing something their not supposed to or their doing some weird tricks or something."

"Stoic, the map is gone!" Gobber ran in.

"Map? What map?" I asked, oblivious to the situation.

"For your own good, mind your own business and forget that I ever said anything about a map." He pointed his hook hand at me.

"Forget anything you said about the map. Right." I nodded to myself.

"That's better. Wait a minute!" He turned to speak with me further but Stoic turned him around.

"What map, Gobber?" He demanded.

"It was a map of Hamish's treasure. I kept it 'cause, well, I thought that you and I could have another go at it." He admitted.

"So, a map's gone, Hiccup's gone and so are the dragons. I'm sure we all know what this means." I said and folded my arms.

"Yep, a dragon's took the map and they're going to get it back." Gobber answered goofily.

"Huh?" I rose a brow at him. "No, Gobber, Hiccup is out to find that treasure."

"Now, why would he do that?" He tapped a finger to his chin thoughtfully.

"I can think of a few good reasons." I looked over at Stoic who looked pretty guilty about the whole situation.

"Oh, no. We have to go get him." He said and ran outside, Gobber following. "Alyssa, you stay here."

"No, I'm coming with." I demanded and walked outside with Shadow following and allowing me to get on his back.

"You're going to risk your life, limbs, mind and friendship with Hiccup? No. Stay here." He pointed to the ground after he got situated on Thornado with Gobber behind him.

"I will risk all of that just to protect him." I answered truthfully. "His life is more important than all of that. I'd do the same for Shadow, you, Astrid, Toothless. Even if Hiccup hates me with his entire being; I'll still be there to help, comfort and protect him. No matter how much he doesn't want it."

\* \* \*

><p>"I don't know; a stone beach, perhaps?" I suggested to the clue. "Or maybe the <em>glacier</em> right in front of us."

"See, I told you it was the glacier but we were here a week looking through the sand!" Stoic told Gobber.

"Hey, you two, I am very well aware that it isn't my place to put the chief and dentist back in their place so we can stand here arguing or we can go and get Hiccup before he gets seriously hurt." I said then pointed onward. "So, let's go already."

They were too in shock by my calm assertiveness.

"Get on that Thunderdrum or I will tie you both to rocks and throw them into the ocean!" I shouted.

The more time was wasted; the more time I'm away from Hiccup. The longer I'm away from Hiccup; the more I don't know about his welfare. Then

\* \* \*

><p>I get moody and rude and demanding. Same thing happened before when I was away from Shadow.</p>

I was heartbroken when I saw the other teens gathered around a bunch of rocks on the outside of a cave. They all looked concerned and afraid with Hiccup and Toothless were nowhere to be seen.

"Hiccup." I gasped along with Stoic.

"Toothless." I continued then charged for the pile of rocks, I tore away at them wildly. "Get them out of there!"

Shadow put his ears up in fright then lowered them to focus. He ran over and began to help with the boulders and rocks, he was using his head and forepaws to push the larger ones away.

"Thanks, bud." I thanked breathlessly as we all kept tearing away at the rocks that covered the cave but that was until we felt the ground shifting beneath our feet.

Shadow was the first one gone. He took off running to find the source of what was doing this.

I followed right after him and the ground was falling around Hiccup and Toothless. Dirt was piled around them.

I sneezed because of the dust that flew into my nose and sighed.

"Son." Stoic said when he saw Hiccup, he ran for him.

"Hey, dad." Hiccup greeted and ran for him as well.

Hiccup leapt up and his father spun him around in a hug. The hug was obviously tight because Hiccup grunted, "Oh, dad, I can't breathe."

I had tears actually forming in my eyes and I usually don't cry when things like this happen but whatever goes on with Hiccup, will effect me on an emotional level.

Anyway, Stoic put him down and the other teens clamoured for him, Gobber as well.

I sighed with a grin, Hiccup is more important than he thinks he is. He thinks that he's 'just another Hiccup' but I think after him finding that paper and the treasure, seeing how much the others missed him and all; really had an effect on him that would have made him jump for joy.

"What happened?" Fishlegs asked.

"Blah-blah-blah. Who cares? Where's the treasure?" Snotlout asked.

"This... is Hamish's real son." Hiccup said, unrolling the paper.

"That's not treasure." Snotlout complained.

"To a father it is." Stoic put a hand on Hiccup's shoulder then knelt to him to speak at eye level. "I never meant to make you feel like ya had to do something like this."

"I know, dad but I had to do it; for myself." Hiccup said with glowing eyes and a smile.

They shared another hug and I bit my lip to hold back tears.

I put my back to the others and put a hand up to my face, letting the tears flow now.

Wait, I didn't get a hug yet.

So after the two let go of each other, I wiped my eyes and ran to Hiccup; lifting him in my arms. "Hiccup, why'd you leave without me? You had me worried sick, you goof."

"Oh, Al. There's no air in my lungs." He gasped.

I placed him back on the ground and looked him over carefully. "Are you hurt at all? You woozy or tired?" I pushed some hair out of his face.

"Al, I'm not hurt." He grinned with glowing eyes as he spoke calmly.  
"I'm not woozy or tired, either."

"Why didn't you tell me where you were going? I was worried sick." I hugged him tighter this time.

"Al, air." He gasped and I was forced to let him go again.

"I had to leave without you." He said and put a hand to his throat.  
"If I brought you along; that would put our whole friendship at stake and I don't want that to happen. You and I are like family and I don't want to lose you."

I grinned at the ground then back up at him, "I had to follow and make sure you were safe. I want you to be safe; I came here risking my life, mind, limbs and friendship with you just to keep you safe."

We only exchanged a smile and another, more gentle hug.

"We're still here." Snotlout sang.

"Shut up." I glanced at him. "We're having a moment."

\* \* \*

><p>There was a new painting made for Hiccup, no longer the one that I wanted to burn but this one... I loved with all of my heart.</p>

Stoic was grinning down at Hiccup who wore his helmet for the picture, he held the scroll of the Hamish's in his hands.

I let out a happy sigh as I saw it and left the great hall, satisfied with the picture now. I regret yelling at Stoic and all, I promise to apologize once I get back to the Haddock house.

Shadow stood up when I got out of the great hall, Hiccup was walking by my side with Toothless. He smiled at me, "You know, I spent my whole life trying to be my dad's kind of Viking but as it turns out, I already was."

I felt the tears brimming again, "Hiccup, you like seeing me cry, don't you?"

He turned away, "Tears of joy; yes."

\* \* \*

><p>"Stoic, I need to speak with you." I said, "Please don't walk away from me this time, please."</p>

"Well, Alyssa, just tell me what it is that's on your mind." He said after poking away at the wood crackling in the fireplace. "Didn't you also have something to say to me a while back about the Outcasts?"

Yeah, that...

"First off, I sincerely apologize for... showing so much disrespect to you and Bucket over the painting. I overreacted and I'm sorry. I know that 'sorry' can't take back what I said but I hope that you can somehow forgive me." I bowed my head a bit, eyes shut respectively.

Silence.

Deafening silence.

I opened my eyes and stood up straight; waiting further for his response.

"Alyssa..." Was what I heard then more deafening silence.

"You're forgiven." He said and that was one huge weight off the shoulders. Now, that gave me confidence for what I was going to say next... hopefully, he doesn't snap on me or anything.

Hopefully.

"As for the Outcast situation... I found out that my birth father; Slade Hudson was Alvin's right-hand man." I gulped, "He's been working with Alvin for years and all of the time he's been on Berk, he's been fooling all of you. Most likely possibility is that he had been gathering up as much information as he could to use it against you all during battle or invasion."

More silence.

It was getting to be a little much.

I was on my breaking point because he was holding back so much and so much silence had filled the room.

### 17. Dragon Flower Pt 1

Silence.

No response.

I was too afraid to look at him.

I had to speak; "Stoic, I-I-I understand if you're upset about this whole thing but you have to understand that I had nothing to do with the Outcasts. I-I-I tr-tried to tell you earlier but you said that you were busy and I just wasn't sure when to tell you after that. I mean, I don't really have a clue on what else to say. I can't say anything in my defense anymore, really."

"So... just hit me. Punch me in the face, throw me off of Berk. Do something! Just don't be so silent with me, please!"

I was falling apart.

I was defeated.

I was broken.

"Just... say something." I said sadly then turned my head downwards.

Why was he so quiet about this?

Why won't he just hit me or something already?

Now fear was consuming me all the more. I felt like I was being accused of a crime I didn't commit.

My heart was pounding against my ribs and the lump in my throat just grew the longer the silence carried on. I know that my legs were shaking and my hands were trembling.

I don't ever remember being so afraid in my life.

I finally grew up the nerve to look up at him.

He was still there but the look on his face was betrayed, upset and quite a few other emotions.

"So, your father is an Outcast?" He asked.

I nodded. "Yes but you need to understand that-."

"How could this be?" He shook his head as he looked at the floor.  
"You can stay but do not let the Berserkers know. They might see this as a sign of betrayal and send us into a war. No other Berkian shall know about this. Understood?"

"Yeah." I nodded toward him quickly. "You can count on me."

I probably should have asked why but I didn't. I was just happy enough that I was staying on Berk. I was staying home.

"Even though I am half Outcast... I am not seeing myself as one of them. I maybe half-blooded Outcast but I was born and raised on Berk; I am a Berkian and no one can take that away from me."

"If any of the other villagers find out about this, you'll be kicked out faster than an eel at a dragon party." Then Stoic gave a kind grin that also showed relief and patted my shoulder. I hadn't expected this. "And may you be considered Berkian. I wouldn't dream of getting rid of you, either. You've protected my boy since the day you first met. You were able to show him love when I wasn't able to, you protected him dangers under any circumstances, you gave him strength. You were never ashamed of standing by his side and protecting him, you considered it a blessing. For all of that... I thank you."

"It wasn't and still isn't a problem. He's very precious to me." I grinned.

\* \* \*

><p>"Hiccup, I told Stoic about the Outcasts." I said immediately after approaching him.</p>

"Well, that's a fine hello." He said. "So, what exactly happened?"

"I'm staying. It turns out that though he was a bit upset about what I had confessed, I get to stay. He also said that he would never get rid of me since I was there for you all of these years. Then he said... thank you."

Hiccup gave a kind grin, "I'm glad that all of that worked out." He said. "I'm so glad that you aren't leaving." He gave me a gentle hug that I returned.

"Me too, buddy. Oh, and the Berserkers can't know about this."

"All right, Al. I got it."

\* \* \*

><p>"Whoa, whoa!" I moved aside from the Vikings shoving past me to get to Trader Johann's ship.</p>

Some of these Vikings get a little too excited when he comes around. I pulled a Night Fury scale necklace out of my satchel and shrugged.

If the rumors of Night Fury scales being lucky items to have on hand are true than maybe Trader Johann could have one for himself for the road. The life of a trader isn't easy, I bet; always traveling island to island and always meeting new people and seeing new places, likewise, some of them are dangerous or somewhere near there.

So, here I am on the ship just looking through the items but not a

single one had interested me in the least. I was more interested with the people that Johann might have met, things he might have seen, places he could have traveled.

"You know, Trader Johann, for those of us that are interested in at least a few of the many people, places or things that you've seen, could it be possible for you to keep a log?" I asked.

"Ah, Alyssa, it would take me a year to write down what I've seen, what I've done and the people I've met. Each one was an absolute sight." He said. "Has anything interesting happened here at Berk since I've been gone?"

"Well, as you can tell by the dragons... a lot." I chuckled. "Other than that," I thought for a moment than shook my head. "Nothing much."

"Ah, I see." He said then looked behind me, "Oh, that is pure squid ink, Hiccup. Wrestled from the colossal squid of the northern waters."

I turned to look at Hiccup.

"Well, Johann, how 'bout this spyglass? You know I made it myself." Hiccup asked Johaan; pulling out one of his many spyglasses.

"I know, you've given me five just like it. Unfortunatly, I've only got the two eyes." He said after taking it from Hiccup's hands then giving it back. He uncomfortably rubbed his shoulder.

"What do you think of this winch?" He pulled a winch out of his satchel.

Shadow flew onto the boat and rested on the bow, he looked over the items curiously with wide eyes at all of the new items. I grinned at him, "Shadow, what are you doing?"

He trilled and sniffed at a barrel curiously then moving on to sniffing a burlap sack then a chest of fruit. He was smelling at everything, marveling all that there was.

"So, I take it that you've never seen any of this before?" I asked as I continued grinning at my curious dragon, he looked up and tilted his head before sniffing at a quilt then picking it up and throwing it in the air.

"Shadow, what are you doing?" I asked.

He looked at me from under the quilt like a curious puppy and purred with a grin, waving his tail around. He crawled out from under it and shook himself off.

A lot of people were staring at him strangely but I was looking at him endearingly; I mean, come on! It was just so cute!

"So, do you want this quilt?" I asked.

Shadow considered the question but shook his head then went around to exploring more of the items on the boat's deck as I folded the quilt up and put it back where it was before going after him.

He pushed his nose through a gap between two chests and grabbed something, pulling it and at the same time there was a thump from behind the mast where I remember Hiccup standing.

"Ow, Shadow, why would you do that? What are you doing?" He asked and stood back up.

Shadow held something orange in his mouth and spit it out, it was a piece of silk that I guess ended up on the ground, Hiccup stepped on it and Shadow picked it up without knowing Hiccup was standing on it.

Shadow looked up at Hiccup apologetically with large eyes and a whimper.

Hiccup rolled his eyes with a sigh, "You're forgiven, Shadow." He said then gently rubbed his head.

"Apologies, Hiccup. He's just curious about it all." I said and pet Shadow's head before he took off once again.

We heard Stoic grunting a bit and looked over to see him waving around a sword.

"Wow, another sword. Just what we need." Hiccup said with a small eye roll.

"If you must know, it's not for me. I'm having my yearly meet with the cheif of Shivering Shores. The last guy that showed up without a gift, left without a head." He ended his explanation and after all of his sword-swinging, a few posts and pieces of wood just ended up scattered about and cut very cleanly.

Shadow walked past and accidentally hit a basket with his tail, it almost fell overboard but he leapt over and caught it, pulling it back up onto the boat then looked guiltily at me and Johann.

"It's okay, bud. Nobody got hurt." I eased and he picked his ears back up; sniffing about the boat again.

"Shadow isn't too used to new things, is he?" Hiccup asked.

"Not really. A lot of the times when I heal his wounds, he always sniffs and sometimes tastes the herbs." I said then looked at Shadow from over Hiccup's shoulder.

He put his head in a basket and it got stuck, he began to shake his head violently then when he threw it off and it hit a fellow Viking in the back of the head, knocking him overboard.

"No one saw that, right?" I asked.

"Except for you, me and Toothless." Hiccup responded.

"Well, you're always welcome on our shores." Stoic said; finishing up his conversation with Johann then going to his Thunderdrum. "I'll be back in five days. Who am I kidding? I'll be back in two thanks to Thornado."

Thornado let out a small roar and Hiccup and I winced a bit.

"So you finally named him." Hiccup said. "Thornado, huh?"

"That's right." Stoic said and Thornado began to buck around a bit. "Because he has the power of Thor with the ferocity of a tornado! Besides, it's the only thing he'll answer to, turns out he can \_be quite stubborn\_!" He explained as Thornado bucked around wildly.

"I can't imagine where he gets that from." Hiccup and I said in unison.

"Up, Thornado." Stoic said and without a second thought, Thornado flew up and away.

"Men riding dragons." Johaan said, "What a magnificent sight."

"Women ride dragons, too." I added.

Shadow was still curiously nosing about the ship and took a couple of sudden deep breaths, I cocked a brow then he sneezed onto a basket, setting it on fire.

"Shadow, what's wrong?" I asked, he huffed and tilted his head.

"I'll pay for that." I said and pulled out two Night Fury scale necklaces, I handed them to Johann. "There you go; Night Fury scale necklaces. Supposed to bring good luck from what I've heard people claim."

Johann took them, "Good luck, eh?" He asked. "Well, I guess I'm a very lucky man."

"I guess so." I said.

He turned his back away so he could put away the necklaces next to a few cabbages then he turned back to see our favorite, little Terrible Terror sniffing away at the baskets next to the cabbage.

"Now, now, little fella," He said to her, "That's not for you, go away." He reached for her but she snapped her jaws at him. He grabbed her and tossed her away, "Fiesty little fella, huh?"

Shadow growled when he saw this and jumped forth with Toothless but Shadow was a tad more relentless; he was ready to sink his teeth into Johann.

"Shadow, don't!" I said; putting a hand up to his nose. His fierce growling calmed down and he huffed harshly before turning to aide to the little Terror. He lifted her up in his mouth and set her down on her feet. She shook herself and stretched out a bit with a huff.

"Sorry about that." I apologized while rubbing the back of my head. "Toothless and Shadow were just being protective."

Hiccup nodded then picked up a piece of glass from the deck, ink all around it. I guess that one of the two knocked the ink out of his

hands. "Oh, it's gone."

"Oh, sorry, lad. That was my last one." He said.

"Pebble, are you okay?" I asked the little Terror. She huffed quietly and flew up to me; licking my face. "I'll take that as a 'yes.'"

"Pebble?" Hiccup asked, cocking a brow at me.

"Yeah, she's small but she's hard." I said, holding her in an arm. She purred and nuzzled me. "Remember when she fought with us during the Red Death battle?"

"That's the same Terror?" He pointed at her.

"Sure is." I said proudly. "If you need more proof just look at the wing; there's a scar where her wing was slit by the Red Death's fang."

"Oh." He said then thought, "Didn't you say before that it was Green Death?"

"Yeah but a lot more people call it Red Death." I said. "I usually switch between the two names."

Shadow took another very deep breath and turned from the boat, he sneezed loudly and plasma fired wildly into the air. I walked over to him, "Shadow, what's wrong, bud? Are you sick or something?"

He shook his head and huffed again, this time sounding slightly congested.

"You sure?" I cocked a brow; not quite believing him.

He nodded and took another deep breath, I ducked and plasma flew over me. I stood back up and he shook his head, peeling his lips back and growling in irritation.

"Do you have a cold?" I asked.

He licked his lips and shook himself around a bit then gave a tired grin to me. He wasn't wanting me to worry, it seemed. I patted his head gently, "Shadow, it's okay if you are. I'll help you."

He groaned softly and stretched out, he turned to walk off the ship and looked back at me, making sure that I was following.

I looked him over as he waited for me; tired eyes, frowning mouth, drooped wings and low ears. Now, for sure, I know he's sick.

I walked off the boat and walked next to him, he wasn't wanting to fly and he looked just about ready to puke. Did he get into something on ship that did this?

"What's wrong with Shadow?" Hiccup asked and knelt to Shadow as he slept. He laid a hand over the top of Shadow's head and pet him gently and carefully.

"I don't know. He just got really sick when we were on Johaan's ship

and now he just looks terrible." I said.

"Hm, can dragons catch a cold?" Hiccup asked.

"No clue."

"Poor guy." He said and pet Shadow across the spines on the top of his head. "Wonder what happened to him."

"I wish I knew, too. I don't like seeing him like this. It's just... sad." I said.

Hiccup just looked at Shadow for a moment then turned away, he began to walk for the door. "Al, I'm going to the academy. If you need me, I'll be there, okay?"

"Okay." I said.

Hiccup left and I looked down at Shadow, he was resting heavily and I reached over, petting down his head, neck and back. The poor dear, he looks awful and most likely feels awful. I leaned over onto his large head and neck, stroking lovingly.

I didn't know what else to do.

\* \* \*

><p>"So, yeah, Shadow's just... sick and we don't know what's wrong. I like to think that it's a cold but," Hiccup said, flying next to Astrid. "I don't even know if dragons get colds. Then there was Toothless's sneezing back in the academy so it could be spreading from dragon-to-dragon."</p>

Toothless sneezed then and began to lose control of his flying and crashed into the nearby ground, Hiccup flying off of him.

"Toothless, you okay, bud?" Hiccup asked, holding Toothless's head. "Toothless?" He looked up at Astrid, "This is kind of what I'm talking about; the only difference was that Shadow didn't want to fly."

Then Pebble fell tiredly next to Astrid on the ground, breathing up a bit of fire and hiccuping a bit. Astrid picked her up.

"Whatever it is; looks like he's got it, too." She said, holding the little Terror in her arms.

"Uh, 'she.'" Hiccup corrected. "That's Pebble."

"Pebble?" She asked with a cocked brow.

"Yeah, she's the same one from the battle with the Red Death, according to Al. She says that you can tell because of the scar on her wing. She named the Terrible Terror 'Pebble' because she's small but she's hard." He explained to her.

Astrid rose her brows but shook it off, "So, Pebble, huh? So... does she have an owner? Because last time I checked, she was a stray."

"Other than Al? No." Hiccup said then took her in his arms.

"She would probably want Pebble to be with her if she's sick."

"You're right but Al has her hands full enough with Shadow right now, I don't know if bringing Pebble along will make her feel better or make her fret more."

"You know, I'll go ahead and take Pebble." Astrid said; taking the Terror back from him. "She's not a very big dragon, anyway so she won't be much trouble to me."

"I'm sure Al appreciates it." Hiccup smiled kindly and gratefully.

\* \* \*

><p>I stayed with him for so long with Shadow that I ended up falling asleep with him. He wasn't asleep but his eyes were shut, I reached over and pet his head again. He groaned loudly and whined at me, still not opening his eyes.</p>

"Shadow, it's just me; Alyssa. Trust me, you're gonna be okay. We'll find out what's wrong with you, I promise."

Shadow groaned again.

I sat up straight and looked over to Hiccup and Toothless; he was walking Toothless upstairs.

"He's sick." Hiccup said; straight to the point.

"Huh?" I asked.

"We were flying around and he just crashed into the ground. He's not hurt but he looks pretty sick. A few of the other dragons are, too. Hookfang, Meatlug and a few others." He explained. "Pebble is, too but Astrid's taking care of her. She said that Pebble shouldn't be too troublesome."

"Tell her I said 'thanks' if you see her before I do." I said then went back to petting Shadow.

"According to Gothi, they're allergic to something new on the island. Since Johann was just here this afternoon, it could be anything. We're going to go out in a bit and throw all of our stuff into a hole and get rid of it before it harms any other dragons."

"The poor dears." I said then kissed the top of Shadow's head. He cracked his eye open large enough to see me and gave a weak grin before shutting his eyes again.

## 18. Dragon Flower Pt 2

Shadow and Toothless laid together on Toothless's bed close to one another. Shadow was cuddled up close to Toothless and Toothless's head laid over the back of Shadow's neck.

The two were sick and only getting worse by each passing second just as the rest of the dragons. I really hope that whatever has gotten the poor dears sick will be gone soon and they'll get better.

"Okay, Al, I'm going now." Hiccup said and stood up, stretching his triceps a bit. "You coming?"

"No, I'll... stay here and man the fort." I said and continued petting Shadow then Toothless with my free hand.

"If anything, anything goes wrong; you come running, okay?" He made sure that I got it and I nodded towards him.

"I promise you that if their conditions worsen anymore than they already are, I will come running to you." I said while placing a hand over my heart.

"Okay, bye, guys." He left.

I pet the two dragons across the tops of their head again. "You guys don't have to worry, we'll get you two better soon."

No reaction from either of them, they just laid resting.

I got the Book of Dragons out from underneath Hiccup's bed and began to flip through it. I've read it countless times and I don't remember anything about them being allergic to anything but hopefully I can find something.

\* \* \*

><p>"How's Pebble?" Hiccup asked Astrid while other Vikings threw in whatever they had gotten from Trader Johann.</p>

"She's not doing better." Astrid said glumly. "None of the dragons are. Hopefully we've gotten rid of whatever got them sick. I imagine Al's a wreck right now."

"She's pretty close to it. I'm pretty sure that we all are."

Astrid nodded, "I wouldn't doubt it."

\* \* \*

><p>"Come on, come on." I quietly urged and flipped through the pages. "There has to be <em>something</em>... anything."

I had absolutely no luck in finding anything that could have got them sick or anything even remotely close to a cure.

"Please." I was practically begging now. "Just... a cure. What's the source? Come on."

If the dragons keep getting sicker or worse then I will personally beat the crap out of whoever is responsible. So many dragons are suffering because of them and if they sit idly by while all of this is happening then I'll-

Shadow groaned and snapped me out of my thoughts, he looked over at me with drooping lids. I got up and walked towards him then placed a

hand on the top of his head, he looked up at me tiredly then laid his head back down.

"You'll be fine, I promise." I said, "As soon as we figure out what in the name of Thor is going on with you, we'll get you all better."

Shadow didn't respond, he was asleep again.

"Are they better or worse?" Hiccup asked after coming back home.

"Neither." I said sadly. "Their condition is pretty consistant and they don't seem as if they'll be getting better."

"Well, we just got rid of everyone's stuff that they got from Trader Johaan so I guess we'll just... see how they feel in the morning." He said rather quietly.

"Okay, okay." I nodded sadly and pet both dragons. "Good night, guys. Sweet dreams." I kissed the top of both of their heads and then I looked back up at Hiccup before I headed out, "Sweet dreams, Hic."

"Sweet dreams, Al." He said.

\* \* \*

><p>"Hey, bud." Hiccup woke up and looked at Toothless with a hopeful grin. "Wanna go flying? I bet that'll make you feel better. We can have a race with Shadow and Al afterwards."</p>

Toothless looked tiredly up at him and sneezed right at him. Luckily, Hiccup ducked and the fire hit above his bed. His eyes were full of sadness and his vision shifted to the floor.

"Shadow, are... you doing any better?" He asked.

Shadow looked up at him with tired eyes like Toothless's and sighed. He looked away, crossed one paw over the other and laid his head down. He took a deep breath in then sneezed out plasma just as Toothless had done.

"Shades, buddy, how are you doing?" I asked when I saw him resting on the bed with Toothless.

His eyes opened slightly and they were a bit puffy. He didn't nod or shake his head for a response, he didn't purr or growl or make any noise at all. He just laid his head back down and shut his eyes again.

The eyes that were just about always filled with life and emotion were dull and tired. His beaming, green eyes stayed shut as he continued breathing heavily.

"You poor dear. I promise that you'll be okay." I promised him once again.

"Astrid, how the dragons?" I asked.

"Neither Stormfly or Pebble are getting better." She replied sadly.  
"None of the dragons are."

"It doesn't make sense. We all threw away the stuff we bought from Trader Johann but the dragons aren't getting any better." Fishlegs said.

"I couldn't help but notice that Alyssa didn't throw anything in. She didn't even show up." Snotlout accused.

"What? Me?" I asked absolutely dumbfounded by the statement. "Why would I do that? I love dragons."

"I saw you give Johann two necklaces so that means that you must have got something from him."

"You can see when I'm paying for something but you can't see when I'm about to do this?" I asked and he looked at me up and down.

"Do what?"

"This!" I stomped on his foot. "Those necklaces were for a basket that Shadow had burnt."

He pulled it up towards him and jumped up and down. "What was that for?!"

"Don't you ever make an accusation like that again without complete evidence." I warned then held him up by the shirt collar. "Or else next time-."

"Al!" Hiccup called out to me to get my attention. "Let's not do this while the dragons are sick, okay?"

I glared into Snotlout's eyes for a quick moment then turned away to listen to the rest of the conversation that had been carried on for a while.

"Anyways, there must have been somebody that didn't want to give up what they bought." Astrid continued.

"When I find out who did it, I am going to be so mad!" Snotlout said. "Hookfang was so sick, I was up all night cleaning dragon barf off our walls."

"Oh, yeah? Well, ours is dead!" Tuffnut exclaimed.

Astrid and I gasped.

"Just kidding but he really isn't all that fun anymore." He said.

"He just sits there. He won't blow anything up!" Ruffnut added.

"You butt-for-brains, don't even joke about that." I removed my hand from my heart. "Had me scared out of my wits."

"Are you sure you have them?" Snotlout snickered.

"Would you shut up? I am going to—" I reached for his neck but Hiccup

pulled me away by the back of my tunic a bit with Astrid's help. "Let me at 'im! Let me at 'im!" I struggled only a bit then calmed down when Astrid kicked me in the leg.

During my conversation with Snotlout and the twins, I hadn't realized that Stoic and Thornado showed up.

"Hiccup, add this to the Book of Dragons; never fly on a stomach full of undercooked mutton." He said. "The Shivering Shores will never be the same." Then he looked around at all of the dragons that laid tiredly on the ground. "Hiccup, Alyssa? What's wrong?" He asked.

"It's the dragons, uh..." Hiccup began.

"They're sick." Astrid said. "And getting worse."

"Every dragon?" Stoic asked.

\* \* \*

><p>"Poor guys." He said as he knelt next to the two Night Furies.  
"What do you think happened?"<p>

"Uh, I don't know." Hiccup said. "Gothi says they're allergic to something new on the island but we think we've gotten rid of everything."

"But if the dragons aren't getting better-"

"Something must still be here that's making 'em sick." Hiccup said. We all heard Thornado roar outside and our eyes widened.

"Thornado." Stoic said and ran outside with Hiccup and I following right behind him. Thornado sneezed as soon as we came out.

"Sneezing is the first symptom." I said sadly.

"But he was fine until we got back." Stoic stated.

"Uh, we should retrace your steps." Hiccup said.

"Well, this is where I landed." He stood over where he brought Thornado in to land earlier that day.

"Okay, look for anything unusual." Hiccup said.

"Does that count?" Fishlegs pointed towards Ruffnut and Tuffnut as they laughed goofily and got on their hands and knees, they charged at each other and fell backwards onto their backs. The two shot up in unison.

"I'm seeing stars." Ruffnut said.

"No way, me too!" Tuffnut said.

"Fishlegs, this is completely normal behavior for the twins. I thought you knew that by now." I said.

We heard a Terror growling and looked over to see it eating on an

unfamiliar flower. It was blue or maybe a light shade of indigo, perhaps.

"What's this?" I touched a petal softly as Hiccup pulled a flower out.

"Uh, does anyone remember seeing these flowers before?" He asked.

"They were here when I got back." Stoic said.

Fishlegs took the one from Hiccup's hands. "It looks an awful lot like the blue oleander. I recognize it from my botany book, chapter eight."

Blue oleander... now why does that sound familiar? Hm... I'll think about that later. The dragons are sick right now, all that matters is that we get the dragons healthy again.

"Is there anything specific that you can remember?" Hiccup asked.

"They're very beautiful, very soft, perinial and..." His face turned into one of dread. "Poisonous to reptiles."

"Which means poisonous to dragons." Hiccup and I said in unison.

"This is serious." Fishlegs said.

"No kidding." I added.

"Did your book say anything about a cure?" Hiccup asked.

"I don't know because somebody made me throw it in a pit!" He replied.

"Go get it, you weak-minded fool!" I demanded and pointed off into a random direction.

"Go back and dig it up!" Hiccup said and with our... 'encouragement' Fishlegs left for his book.

"I don't understand, where did these flowers even come from?" Astrid asked.

There was a short silence but then we heard Tuffnut say "Mildew."

"What?" I snarled.

"I saw him plant them the other night." He said simply.

"And you didn't think that was strange?" Astrid and I asked.

"No, well... maybe."

We all gave looks of irritation and/or frustration toward him.

"I don't know, quit pressuring me!" He folded his arms.

Thornado sneezed once again and Stoic straightened out his helmet.  
"Let's go pay the old man a visit."

"I'll be glad to." I snarled darkly and walked off before any of the others.

\* \* \*

><p>"Yes, I've planted some flowers. The town square has never looked better. I was merely trying to spread some beauty and happiness."  
Mildew said in his own, pathetic defense.</p>

"Since when have you cared about beauty or happiness?" Astrid and I demanded.

"You did this." Hiccup pointed out and Stoic gave a glare to the old battle axe.

"What? Me? Well, I had no inkling, Stoic, that these flowers has special properties. It's true I'm no friend of the dragon but in this case, on my life, I was not trying to harm them." Mildew said in his own defense.

"Let's go." Stoic sighed and pushed Hiccup and Astrid out. I glared Mildew in the eye and stepped towards the nasty, old battle axe.

"If anything, anything happens to these dragons... I can personally promise you that you will not like where I stick this sword." I pulled my sword halfway out of its sheath. "Then I will tie you to a rock and throw you into the ocean."

"Alyssa, get back here!" Stoic called.

"Duty calls." I said darkly to Mildew then slid the sword back into its sheath and left.

\* \* \*

><p>"Fishlegs, you found your botany book!" Hiccup exclaimed.</p>

"What does it say?" Astrid asked.

Fishlegs seemed to be on the verge of tears from the look of him, he breathed heavily and looked frightfully at all of us.

"Calm down, talk to me." Hiccup said.

"My botany book says that blue oleander's poisonous to reptiles and dragons are reptiles!"

"We have that covered already, what else does it say?" I said in a rush.

"In the Book of Dragons, it speaks of a dragon that feeds on the blue oleander."

"Scauldron." I said; making the others look at me. "In a perfect world, if it eats the flowers, then its venom could be used as an

antidote such as with snakes and spiders."

"But alas, we do not live in a perfect world." He said and opened the book to the page with a Scauldron. "The Scauldron has no venom."

"No but it looks cool." Tuffnut smirked.

"They aren't fun from what I've experienced." I muttered.

"Don't you understand? The book says no venom!" Fishlegs pouted at Tuffnut.

"Okay, got it. 'No venom.' Golly, write it on your forehead." Tuffnut said in irritation.

"The book is wrong." Gobber said suddenly and made us all turn to look at him. "I've dealt with a Scauldron before; they're sixty feet long, razor sharp teeth and they shoot boiling water that melts the flesh from your bones! The Scauldron has no fear, no conscious but what a Scauldron does have is venom! And lots of it!"

"I'm out." Tuffnut said.

"I'm with him." Ruffnut followed.

"Gobber, there's a fault with what you've just said." I held a hand up.

"And what would that be?" He asked.

"Well, I have dealt with a Scauldron before and it wasn't sixty feet long but on a fishing trip, I saw the outline of one and it was far larger than sixty feet. So, the one you may have met may have been sixty feet long but they are actually a very large Tidal class dragon." I finished then looked at the others as they spoke. "And once again, not a word got through."

"You guys stay here and take care of the dragons." Hiccup said.

"Who will go with you?" Fishlegs asked.

"Al, of course. Dad, Gobber; let's go find ourselves a Scauldron." He said.

"I thought you'd never ask." Gobber said.

Before we went to set off, we were comforting our dragons for a bit. I pet Shadow's head as it laid next to Toothless's over the edge of the bed.

"Look at that thing." Hiccup said as he looked at the Scauldron picture. He closed it and went over and pet Toothless. "Just hold on, bud. I'll be back before you know it."

After going out to Stoic, Hiccup nodded at me. "Dad, it's time. The boat's ready."

So on the boat, Mildew just kept complaining the whole way through. "Well, this is an outrage. I dug up all the flowers, I did my part!"

"We're all out here because of you, Mildew." Stoic pointed at him.  
"If we have to put our lives at risk than so do you."

"You have no proof, Stoic. You can't blame me everytime that something goes amiss with your precious dragons." He said in Hiccup and I's faces.

"You smell like fish, ale and donkey." I shook my head. "So, pardon if I'm not being quite so polite to you." I kicked his shin and made him jump a bit while holding it. "That's for the flowers." I said and 'accidentally' pushed him back while no one was looking then said quietly "And that's for everything else."

Hiccup pulled me to the side of the boat and began to talk to me ask we looked over the dark water that was lit by moonlight. "So, Al, when you tangled with the Scauldron. None of the water from its mouth hit you, right?"

"Right." I said. "It just blew some steam out through its nose and gave me that burn on my stomach."

"I remember you saying that. And they're not sixty feet long?"

"You mean that you actually heard that?" I asked and he gave me a simple nod and grin.

"I hear just about everything you say... with the exception of Hookfang's tooth." He said and I grinned a bit before sighing.

"I've seen Scauldrons twice before; when I was fishing on a boat with you and your father a couple of years back and you guys didn't believe me when I said that I saw a Scauldron that was a little over the size of a Monsterous Nightmare's wingspan."

Hiccup bit his lip and looked away.

"Then there was when I got my burn." I said, "He couldn't have been more than thirty feet long, I suppose. He was probably a baby."

"So, the size may vary?"

"Correct." I nodded towards him.

"All right, Stoic, what's the plan?" Gobber handed a bucket over to Stoic that came and gave it to Hiccup.

"Hiccup, when Gobber and I secure the Scauldron's head, Sven will wedge its jaws open and we'll need you to-

"Drain the poison into this bucket." Hiccup finished. "Got it."

"Alyssa, you stay as back up in case anything goes wrong." Stoic said.

"All right." I nodded.

"Let's get started." Hiccup said then began to throw the blue olenaders that were dug up into the water. "This is what Scauldrons

eat. It'll draw them to the boat."

After a while longer, Mildew began to complain once again.

"This is not working. It was a stupid idea to begin with!"

Hiccup was about to step up but Stoic put a hand on his back, "Easy, son. That's not why we're here."

He didn't do anything to block me so I kicked the old man in the shin once again. "If you have a better idea, please let us hear it, wise one." I said sarcastically with a bow.

Mildew was silent.

"So keep your nasty, old mouth shut. I don't want to hear another complaint from you, once we get back to Berk; I promise that I'll—"

"Scauldron, everyone." Gobber said.

"Scauldron." Stoic gasped after seeing it.

"Oh, he's a big one." I said as his head came over water and growled a bit. His back also came out of the water and he splashed about. This one was definately longer than a Monsterous Nightmare's wingspan.

"We need to lure the Scauldron up on deck!" Hiccup called and threw the remaining blue oleanders across the deck.

"Oh, that's great. Get him on the ship where he can have at us all!" Mildew said.

"I have just about had it with you!" I called over another splash.  
"I'm so close to tossing you overboard!"

"You aren't the only one." Stoic said.

"Gobber, secure the neck with this!" He threw some rope to Gobber.  
"I'll wrastle his horn!" They ran to the front of the boat where they looked over the side for the Tidal class dragon.

"Where did it go?" Gobber asked.

I checked the water for any movement whatsoever, the ship was silent. No noise at all.

Sven suddenly grunted as his oar was pried from him and dragged out into the water where it went under and was most likely devoured. He looked over the side of the boat along with a few others and cried out when water splashed behind a dragon figure under the water.

It got closer and closer until it hit the ship so hard that it flew into the air. After it returned to water, a large Scauldron poked his head up near the bow.

"Wow, he's big." I gasped.

Mildew cried out and ran across deck, the Scauldron put one of his

large forepaws up on the ship and tilted it downwards. I heard Hiccup cry out as he slid down the deck.

"Hiccup!" Stoic called.

"I've got you!" I called to him and slid down after him. I wrapped an arm around his torso just below his arms and used my other hand to hold onto a shield on the side of the boat. "See? Got you."

"Thanks." He gasped.

"Don't mention it." I grinned and slowly worked us back up towards Stoic and Gobber, careful not to slip.

The Scauldron ate at whatever oleanders fell towards him and Stoic called out, "Gobber, here's our chance!" They took off towards the Scauldron.

"Okay, bucket. Where'd the bucket go?" Hiccup looked around and I held it up in my now free hand as my arm let go of him.

"You mean this?" I asked.

He looked around then back at me, "Thanks." He took the bucket and waited for his cue to go.

The ropes went around the neck and horn of the Scauldron, they pulled him down to the boat and he hit his head on it; making it tilt once again. I held onto Hiccup once again and a rope in my other hand that kept us in place. Once the boat stopped rocking, I let him go once again.

"Sven, we need that barrel now!" Stoic shouted.

Sven ran up and held a barrel in his hands.

"I've got the bucket!" Hiccup called.

"Careful, son, you don't wanna get that venom in you!"

"Yes, I know, dad. I'll be dead in twenty-four hours." Hiccup blew it off.

Sven threw the barrel into the dragon's mouth but it broke shortly after. Then the dragon used his tail to slap Sven away and into the ocean water.

"Alyssa, find something else to wedge his jaw open!" Stoic ordered.

"Sir. Yes, sir!" I shouted with a salute and looked for something stronger than a barrel.

There was a splash, "Hiccup, behind you!" I heard and when I turned around; Hiccup was on the ground and Stoic was latched onto the dragon's tail. He was plowed over the shields that decorated the sides of the ship and broke them off and after the tail slammed Stoic against the mast, he held on tight and didn't allow the tail to move. He had it pinned, "I've got his tail!"

I looked down at Stoic's line and made a run for it, I held onto it and kept the Scauldron in place but after a sudden jerk of its head; I ended up losing my footing, letting go of the rope and sliding down some ways. The dragon looked at me and opened his jaws but thankfully, another barrel got in the way and propped it open just long enough for me to get away.

"Go, Al! Move!" Hiccup called then held onto the rope; throwing it over a metal bar. "I've got it! Come on, Al!"

I ran up to him and held onto the rope with him.

"You're a life-saver." I said.

"No problem." He said.

"How'd you manage to move that barrel?"

"Really? You're going to ask that now?"

"Yes."

"Now, pull him in! Use the mast to wench his jaw open!" Stoic ordered. We did as we were told and opened his jaws using the mast.

"Mildew, grab the bucket!" Stoic called.

"Hold on! It's one thing for me to-"

"Grab the bucket or I'll throw you overboard myself!" Stoic shouted.

Mildew grabbed the bucket but didn't have the chance to do anything since there was a bit of a mist forming in the dragons open mouth.

"Everyone, take cover!" Stoic shouted.

"I've got you, Hic." I said and lifted a shield up, holding him close to me as we crouched behind it and Gobber behind us.

The hot water burnt through the mast and it fell into the water, taking Stoic down with it.

"Dad!" Hiccup called.

"He's a strong man, I'm sure he'll be fine." I said as Gobber held him back.

The Scauldron roared at Mildew and sent him running across the deck, it had followed Mildew around the deck for a while with only his eyes then sunk its teeth into his behind.

"Remind me to thank that Scauldron." I said, the sea dragon pulled away and dove back into the water. I got up and leaned over the side of the boat, "Thank you!"

"Al, what are you so happy for? He's gone." Hiccup said.

"And you can bet the last place that beast's coming back to is this ship." Gobber followed.

"We didn't get the venom." Stoic said.

Just then, we all heard Mildew let out a pained scream.

"Yes, we did." Hiccup corrected.

"That's what I'm so happy about." I smirked.

"Get the poison out of me!" Mildew cried.

"Oh, we will." Hiccup and I said in unison.

\* \* \*

><p>Back at Berk, Gobber was extracting the poison from Mildew's butt and the old battle axe kept letting out anguished screams and cries. Most of us teens that stood around made disgusted faces with all of his screaming.</p>

"Can you believe we're all just standing around, waiting for something to come out of Mildew's butt?" Tuffnut asked.

"Never thought I'd see the day." I said; humouring him.

Gobber had taken something off of the wall but we couldn't see what it was due to the curtain and there was a nervous chuckle from Mildew.

"Don't you have something a bit smaller that you could use?" He stammered.

"Probably." Gobber responded then there was another cry of pain from Mildew.

I began to snicker quietly.

"That's the sound of our dragons getting better." Astrid said.

"Music to my ears." I sighed happily.

Gobber then came out to us holding a cup in his hands. "I've seen a Nadder's spine cut through a man's eyeball like a grape, I watched my own arm get devoured by a Monsterous Nightmare but never, never have I ever seen anything so disturbing as that old man's bare behind." Gobber sounded like he was on the verge of tears. "Here, take this to your dragons." He handed the cup over. "I'm going into the forest to scream." He began to walk away.

Hiccup held up the cup, "Way to take one for the team, Gobber."

\* \* \*

><p>\<p>

We all anxiously waited for our dragons to get better after giving

them the poison. Toothless laid tiredly on the ground while Hiccup sat next to him and pet across his wide head. I was leaning over Shadow's neck and back gently and petting back and forth along his head and neck.

Stoic came in yet again, this was the fourth time he came in and Hiccup spoke up to him. "Relax, dad. It's going to be fine." Stoic left again and went back outside.

I saw Hiccup begin to lean over Toothless and sadly rub at his head and almost immediately after, Toothless's eyes opened and he trilled at Hiccup affectionately.

"Toothless." He gasped. "Hey, bud!"

I grinned at the two and felt a tap on my back, I turned around and saw nothing but Shadow's tail curled up more than it should have and quicker than it should have. I sat up and put my head down near his face, after a couple of seconds of waiting, his eyes shot open. They were like they should be; full of life and as usual when they saw me, excited.

"Shadow." I grinned then felt his large, forked tongue lick across my face. "Thank goodness you're all right." He leapt up and tackled me onto my back, licking me once again. "Yep, I'm here, bud." I laughed then noticed that Hiccup and Toothless weren't in the house anymore but I heard them outside since the door was left open.

"Dad, they're coming around." Hiccup said.

Shadow got up and shook himself a bit and waited for me to get up, which I did without a second thought and wandered outside with him following me.

We came out just in time to see Thornado's eyes open and Stoic gave a hearty laugh, "Thornado!" He said and affectionately got down on his hands and knees, pressing his head against Thornado's mouth and shaking them together a bit while Thornado purred.

I stroked the side of Shadow's head, "You doing okay now?" He purred and nudged me with his nose. "Good to know."

"Great to have you back, bud." Hiccup said after Toothless fired into the air.

Thornado let a roar out into the night and that alone told us that he was okay.

Hiccup nudged me with his elbow, "You know, I never thought I'd ever have to deal with a deadly flower, a venomous sea dragon and Mildew's butt all in the same day."

I laughed and nudged him back, "I don't think any of us did but at least the dragons are okay now." Shadow nudged my back with his nose; purring at me and rubbing his head against my arm that hung limply at my side. I reached up and pet across his head. "But when you love something enough; you do anything to protect them." I grinned.

\*\*I don't know if you guys have seen the \_How To Train Your Dragon 2\_ trailer but I highly suggest that you check it out.  
=)\*\*

\*\*BloodBendingDancer: It's nice to see that you are still enjoying this story as much as ever.\*\*

\*\*Iron-Mantis: Haha, sure thing. Thank you for that.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>After completing their course run, Hiccup and Toothless came into the academy to land. "So, how'd we do?" He asked after getting off Toothless.</p>

"Technically, you're second fastest but there's someone and I won't mention who, is gaining significant ground." Fishlegs said.

"Wait, wait. Second fastest?" Hiccup put his hands up. "What do you mean 'second fa-'... oh." And he looked at me.

Shadow gave a proud grin and puffed out his chest with a small shake of his head, I leaned over the side of Shadow's neck and pet his head. Hiccup shook it off and looked at the others to see which was gaining on Toothless.

"Don't look at us." Tuffnut said as him and Ruffnut pushed on each other's heads with their helmets.

His gaze shifted to Astrid, she turned and smirked at him.

"How can that be?" Hiccup asked. "How can Toothless be getting slower?"

"He's not, Stormfly's getting faster." Fishlegs said.

"Oh, really? Is that so? Anything you'd like to share, Astrid?" He asked.

"Let's just say I'm experimenting with what she eats. Apparently, it's working and making you mad." She said. Stormfly stood on alert then burped loudly; a bit of fire came out of her mouth as well.

"And making Stormfly gassy." I commented.

Snotlout laughed a bit and flew into the academy on Hookfang's back, "You will not believe what I just found!" He said excitedly.

"A severed head?" Tuffnut asked.

"Our cousin Lars?" Ruffnut asked.

"Our cousin Lars's severed head?" Tuffnut asked.

"Lars died?" Fishlegs asked nervously.

"Who said that?" Tuffnut asked; sounding a bit offended.

"Fishlegs." I answered then twins glared at Fishlegs and Tuffnut opened his mouth to say something but didn't get to.

"Um, excuse me, do you guys want to see this or not?" Snotlout asked impatiently.

So we ended up flying towards a beach and walking towards a wrecked boat. "This is what we came for?" I asked. "A stupid boat?"

"Yeah, a wrecked boat on Berk. There's something new." Tuffnut rolled his eyes.

"Just remember; I saw it first so it's mine." He said.

"Then keep it." I answered then saw him gesture to look inside of the boat which we all did and saw a girl lying there.

"Wow, now I like the boat." Tuffnut smirked.

"Remember; I get to keep her." Snotlout sang.

"Snotlout, it's a person." Astrid scolded.

"Right? How lucky is that?" He grinned.

"You have some serious issues." I stated with an eye roll. "I'm gone. This had 'bad news' written all over it and I'm not a part of it this time."

"But yet you've hung out with Hiccup for years?" Snotlout smirked.

I glared at him and the twins guffawed then snapped my fingers, "Shadow, you know what to do." He fired at their feet and threw them only two or three feet in the air. "Next time, he won't miss." I got on Shadow's back, "All right, let's just... go for a ride."

Shadow huffed towards the other teens and flew up into the air.

"You do know that whatever's going on down there is trouble, don't you?" I asked and he nodded. "Thought so. You're clever, Shades." I patted him and made him purr.

\* \* \*

><p>"Hi, honey, I'm home!" I called into the Haddock house to no one in particular. There was no answer from anyone. "Hello?" I cleared my throat, "Friend, where have you gone?"<p>

"Al, I heard you the first time." Hiccup said as he came downstairs. "Geez, I was trying to talk to Heather." He gestured upstairs.

"Heather?" I cocked a brow, "Who's Heather?"

"If you stuck around earlier than you'd know that that's the girl that we found under the boat." He said bluntly.

"And you're letting this stranger stay here with us?" I asked. "What the crap, Hic?"

"Alyssa, she's not going to be a problem. I promise." He grinned.  
"You have to trust me."

I sighed after considering it for a moment, "Fine, Hiccup. I'm not going to like but I'm going to at least deal with it. And what was her story? Knowing Astrid, she most likely asked."

"Her home island has been taken by pirates. It's all under seige." He said quietly. "She was with her mother and father but only she escaped."

"Oh, I bet she gave quite the convincing sob story." I rolled my eyes.

"Al, you should be sympathetic towards her." Hiccup's voice rose slightly. "She's hurting right now and so far, you haven't been helping."

"I wasn't trying to help." I replied coldly. "You know how strangers get to me, especially around you."

"Okay, then please stop being so 'protective' and 'untrusting' because you'll miss out on a lot." He said and laid down. "Good night."

Okay, he's obviously pissed with me. He almost never tells me 'good night' it's always 'sweet dreams' unless we're mad at each other. I'm not mad at him, though. Just a bit frustrated with him.

"Sweet dreams, Hic." I said. "And I'll never stop protecting you, if it costs me my life; than so be it." I left the house and Shadow stretched out since he'd been lying on the porch and looked at me curiously. "Come on, bud. Let's go night riding."

He looked curiously at the door and tilted his head. "No, it's nothing, bud." I blew it off. He stood up and lowered his head so I could climb onto him.

"All right, let's go." I said after climbing on. He warbled gently and flew into the night sky. "I don't know who Heather is and I don't care, all I know is, she better not cause us any trouble. If she hurts Hiccup, I will not fret to do damage back."

Shadow looked back at me hesitantly but didn't ask any questions, he turned back ahead and kept flying forward until his head turned downwards and he growled.

"What is it, boy?" I patted the side of his head. He growled more intensely, I followed his line of sight and saw someone running near the Hofferson house. "Let's go and question this little sneak."

Shadow obeyed and pinned the person from behind, judging by the gasp and the cry out from the person; it was a girl. She wasn't familiar in the least, this must be Heather but didn't Hiccup say that he had just got done talking to her? What's she doing out?

"Get off me!" The girl cried.

"Are you Heather?" I growled.

"Yes, yes. Who are you?" She asked desperately.

"The defender of Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III. And let me make one thing clear with you; if Hiccup is harmed, I will not fret to attack. Got it?" I asked coldly.

"Understood." She whimpered from the weight of Shadow's paw on her back.

"Shadow, let her go. Heather, go back in the house." Shadow did as commanded and Heather walked away. "Okay, Shades, let's get back to our night riding."

\* \* \*

><p>"Ooh, Meatlug loves getting her ears cleaned. I know just the right spot." Fishlegs cooed as he cleaned out Meatlug's ears.</p>

Hookfang was walking around with a usual attitude and he was kind of hyped up for some reason. Snotlout yelled at him, "Hookfang, would you just calm down?!"

Hookfang looked down at him and huffed smoke into his face then walked away.

Shadow and I sat against the wall of the academy and I rubbed his stomach, he was kicking his legs about and his tongue was hanging out of his mouth. "You love your belly rubs, don't you?" I asked and rubbed more, Shadow let out a happy groan in response.

"Are we training or not?" Snotlout asked. "You're a dragon trainer, why aren't we doing anything yet?"

"And where's Hiccup?" Fishlegs asked.

"Giving a private lesson." Astrid pointed up at Toothless flying over the academy.

"I didn't know he gave private lessons!" Fishlegs exclaimed excitedly. "Can anybody get in on that?"

"Apparently just her."

"Alyssa, you never answered my question!" Snotlout exclaimed and I momentarily stopped rubbing Shadow's stomach and he looked up at me questioningly. I looked up towards Snotlout.

"Snotlout, you know that my work includes Hiccup by my side and so far, we haven't and aren't going to be on the best terms as long as Heather's here. I'm distracted right now so it would be nice if you could show me the tiniest bit of sympathy. Or is that word too large for you to understand?" I asked coldly.

"What- you just- oh, forget it!" He exclaimed.

Shadow rolled onto his stomach and laid his head against me. I pet him and he purred.

"Top of the morning, class." Hiccup greeted after coming in. I scoffed and he continued. "How's everyone doing today?"

"Nice of you to show up." Astrid said.

"What? Oh, we were supposed to meet up." He slapped a hand to his forehead. "I am so sorry."

"Awkward." Snotlout sang.

"Shut your face, Snotlout. No one is really in the mood for this, got it?" I asked but as usual, I went ignored.

"Oh, Astrid is jealous of the pretty one. Why talk about hens and roosters?" Tuffnut asked and Ruffnut rolled her eyes. Okay, that was part of a conversation that I missed.

"So, Heather, sleep well?" Astrid asked.

"Very well, thank you, Astrid." She replied. Astrid glared and Heather seemed to be a bit uneasy about the whole thing. "So, this is it?" She asked to pull her attention away from Astrid. "Your dragon training academy."

"No, our dragon training academy." Tuffnut corrected. "Remember, I called you the pretty one." He winked and chuckled flirtatiously. At least, I think it was supposed to be flirtatious, it just sounded sinister to me.

"We've been training the dragons to become a part of everyday lives." Hiccup said.

"Even though that they already are." I commented and continued to pet Shadow's head where I was still sitting on the side of the academy. "Absolutely ridiculous bafoons fawning over Heather. She's just bad news."

Shadow nodded and I saw Hiccup shake his head towards me.

"And what exactly do you want?" I asked.

"Alyssa, shut up." He said. Very rarely does he ever use my full first name. When he does, he is either angry, frustrated, shocked, upset or all of the above. "Just go and do something, would ya?"

"If I wanted to leave, I would have left by now but I really need you near me." I answered. He shook his head and turned his attention back towards Heather.

"So, you aren't trusting her either, are you?" Astrid asked quietly as the boys kept talking.

"Nope." I snarled. "She's just bad news and I don't want her near Hiccup."

"Can I see it?" Heather's words reached the ears of Astrid and I as she reached for the Book of Dragons. Due to me sitting down, Astrid ran over before I could and snatched the Book of Dragons away from Fishlegs.

"I'll take that, thank you." She said. "Excuse us." She began to push Hiccup away to talk to him in private. As soon as Hiccup was gone, Snotlout jumped to Heather's side.

I rolled my eyes with a scoff, this is absolutely ridiculous.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup and I ended up having to come inside so Astrid could expose Heather for snooping around, she called for us out of the window and we had went upstairs as fast as we could.</p>

"Well, are you going to say something?" Astrid demanded.

"I am so, so sorry, Hiccup." Heather said. "I was cleaning your room and I found the book. I couldn't help myself."

Hiccup thought but that dense, gullible fool smiled and said "It's okay, Heather."

"It's okay?" Astrid asked with frustration. "What do you mean 'okay'? She's reading the Book of Dragons."

"You need to just need to lighten up, Astrid."

"Me?" Astrid asked, "She's the one sneaking around, looking at our stuff!" She said with frustration.

"Sneaking around? What-what are you talking about?" He asked and looked curiously and somehow hurt at Heather as Astrid spoke.

"I'm talking about last night, near my house?" She emphasized to mock a ringing bell.

"That was me." Heather answered quickly. "I couldn't sleep so I went out for a walk, I've been having terrible nightmares."

"I can imagine." Hiccup said and put a hand over her shoulder sympathetically.

"Is this really happening?" Astrid asked in disbelief.

"Okay, Astrid, that's enough." Hiccup said.

"You're right, Hiccup. It is." She said then angrily walked out of the house.

"Okay, I haven't been around Heather for more than five minutes at a time and I know that this is messed up." I said with folded arms.

I was ignored and felt myself fuming, I am so tired of being ignored.

"Sorry about that." Hiccup said to Heather.

"No, I'm sorry. It was wrong of me to read your book." Heather said and turned away.

"No big deal. I trust you." He said then slid it under his bed, "I'm going back outside. You girls play nice." He walked out.

"No promises." I mumbled. "It'll be better if I leave now." I walked out and turned my head only enough to see Heather giving a devious smirk. I left right then.

\* \* \*

><p>Later that night, I had been falling asleep after a bit then jolted awake to when Astrid kicked the door open, "Alyssa, you and I are going out." She said in a growl.</p>

"Okay but I'm not paying for dinner." I responded tiredly.

She walked up to me and tugged on the back of my tunic.

"Ow, ow! You're holding onto hair and pulling it a bit! Ow, ow!" I complained but she just kept dragging me. "I guess I'll be back after a while, hic, if you're still awake that is!" The door shut and Astrid lead us into the forest a bit, until we were near the beach then gave me a harsh tug.

"Ow, what did I do this time?!" She let go of me roughly and I shook myself off a bit and straightened my tunic. "Geez, Astrid, I didn't even do anything wrong today as far as I know."

She turned and threw her axe right by my head and hit it right into a tree next to me.

"I don't even know what I did!" I put my hands high in the air in hopes of her seeing the white flag flying up. I'm unarmed right now because she didn't give me anytime to grab my sword before we left.

Please don't go psycho-cuckoo on me right now, Astrid. I internally begged.

"You didn't do a thing!" She pried her axe out of the tree next to me, "Little miss innocent was trying to win over my dragon!" She threw the axe again and it almost grazed the top of my head. "I came to you—" She pried it out again, "Because I knew you'd listen to me!" She threw it once again.

"I'm... flattered?" I shrugged in confusion.

"'I think your dragon likes me.'" She said in a mocking voice and pried her axe out of a tree yet again. She growled, "No one messes with me and my friends."

A twig snapped and Astrid and I both hid behind our own tree so we could hide from whoever it was.

After looking at the person, we realized it was Heather. She went over to the small cliff above the water, Astrid shook her head. "This is stupid." She was about to turn around but noticed something, "Wait, that's an Outcast boat."

An Outcast approached Heather.

"Savage." Astrid said quietly.

"What have you learned about the dragons?" Savage asked Heather.

"I've learned a lot but there's something else. Something that's going to make Alvin very happy." She stated.

"I'm listening." Her saying that caused me and Astrid to lean in closer to better hear what was being said.

"They have a book. A book of dragons. It's got everything in it. Everything Alvin could ever hope to learn about controlling dragons."

Savage narrowed his eyes, "Where is this... book?"

"I don't have it with me right now but I will, I promise. I just need a little more time." She pleaded.

"Alvin isn't known for his patience." Savage said sinisterly. "He won't be happy having to wait."

"Please, you have to trust me. When I get back to Outcast Island with that book, the wait will be worth it."

"Well, good. I don't think we want to bring back Slade's daughter. An he was right about something; she really was a trouble."

Astrid leaned in to hear more clearly but knocked over rocks in the process, I pulled her away and held her close to hide her from them but didn't hear their voices any longer.

When we looked back over, Heather was leaving.

Astrid pulled away from me and tugged on my tunic again, "Come on. We're going to tell Hiccup what little miss innocent has been up to."

"Okay." I answered awkwardly.

She pushed the door open and walked to Hiccup, who was sleeping on the floor and kicked him in the middle of his back to wake him up, which effectively worked.

"Um, that's a little harsh." I said defensively. "Don't you do that again."

It doesn't matter how close I am to someone; if they mess with Hiccup, they mess with me. No matter how mad or frustrated I am with him. That's just how it is.

"Shut up." She said and put up a hand to silence me, this emitted a growl from me and a glare.

"Ow! What?" Hiccup rolled over, "Why would you do that? What are you doing?"

"Her idea." I pointed at Astrid.

"Saving our butts. I just saw Heather talking to Savage. She's working with the Outcasts." Astrid said; straight to the point, as to

be expected.

"What? She's upstairs asleep." Hiccup said with a small head gesture to the stairs.

"Oh, yeah?" Astrid asked.

"We'll see about that." I said.

So we went upstairs and she laid soundly in Hiccup's bed and rolled over when we came in the room with a yawn. "Hey, guys. Is everything okay?"

"Yes, Heather. Everything's fine." Hiccup said and put either of his hands on Astrid and I.

"Astrid, don't you think it's possible you saw something else?" Hiccup asked as she was storming away and I had no choice but to follow. "It's pretty dark out there."

"No, Al saw it, too." She pointed at me and they both looked in my direction.

"Al, is this true?" Hiccup folded his arms.

"Yes." I nodded. "And don't say that I'm lying. What would I gain by lying to you?"

Hiccup thought for a moment then looked at the ground. He obviously was considering what I had just said. Then he turned back to Astrid since she began to speak again, "The girl is not who you think she is!"

"Who is she, then?" He asked.

"I don't know! She just mysteriously washed up on our beach. You don't find that strange?"

"No because her ship was taken over by pirates, her whole island is under seige." He said.

"The only thing under seige here is your brain." She said, "You're not thinking clearly."

"Oh, really? Me?" He pointed to himself.

"Hiccup, the Outcasts could be attacking any minute!"

"Astrid, if there's one thing I know, it's this; Heather is not working for the Outcasts."

"Al, let's go." She gestured for me to follow and walked away.

I looked between Hiccup and Astrid, "Okay. Sorry, Hic." I said. He rose his brows but didn't say anything. He simply nodded to me.

"It's okay." He said and then sighed, "Just go so she doesn't yell at you or hit you anymore." I gave a nod back to him, "Sweet dreams, Al."

"Sweet dreams, Hic."

\* \* \*

><p>"Evening, Stormfly. You and I are going out for a little ride." Heather greeted the Deadly Nadder and held out a chicken leg. The dragoness quickly ate it and bowed her head after Heather rubbed her nose to let her climb on, which she did soon after.</p>

A growl from the side startled both Heather and Stormfly, the Nadder didn't respond negatively, though. She only had squawked in reaction towards the two piercing, green eyes staring them down but to be more specific; Heather.

The black mass had growled once again and in her slight panic, Heather gave an order to Stormfly. "Stormfly, attack." She gasped then laid low so the spines wouldn't hit her. The spines flew towards the mass and it let out a pained growl and a soft thud.

"Come on, girl. Let's go." She patted Stormfly's head. The Nadder looked back at where the eyes had been and let out a concerned growl but regardless, followed her order and took flight.

\* \* \*

><p>"Son of a half-troll, munge-bucket!" I heard Astrid shout from outside, it was loud enough to echo through the house.</p>

She had invited me sleep over the night before for reasons I don't know of, it could have been in case that she knows I don't trust Heather but I didn't ask.

I got up and ran outside. "Astrid, what's wrong?" I asked as she looked to be in an angered panic. "Is it Heather? If so, what has she done this time?"

"Yes, little miss innocent stole my dragon. Stormfly is gone!" She said with her clenched fists being held inches from her face.

"Okay, let's go get Hiccup. Where's Shadow?" I whistled for him. "Shades, buddy! Come on, bud."

"Oh, no." Astrid said; looking rather worried. "Um, I found him, Alyssa. He's over there."

Those words made me run to where she was looking and Shadow lied on the ground with Nadder spines in his side. I knelt over him and he snarled when he heard me and his teeth became exposed but his eyes opened and he saw it was only me so he calmed down immediately.

"Astrid, we know that Stormfly would never do this." I began to carefully pull the spines out so no more damage was caused.

"Not unless she was ordered to." Astrid finished. "You're going to have to stay here and take care of him. I'll go get Hiccup." She ran off not a second later.

Shadow groaned softly again and squinted his eyes open. Without a

doubt in my mind, he had more than enough poison in his system from the Nadder's spines. The spines hadn't been deep but enough to seep poison into him so all I needed was herbs.

"Don't worry, bud. I'll take care of you." I said and pet his head. "I'm going to go and get some herbs and other stuff so I can patch you up. You'll be as good as new." I took off inside and then begged to know where any herbs were. "Come on. There's nothing here that'll help."

I slammed my forehead against the wall, "I'll have to go to Haddock's. I'll make it a quick run." I thought aloud to myself and ran into the Haddock house, "Hi, Hiccup. Hi, Stoic. I need to get some herbs."

"For what? More cuts?" Stoic asked.

"And Nadder poison. Heather had Stormfly attack Shadow." I went through their herbs. "Okay, okay. Hmm, got it!" I grinned when I got it. "Got it make it fast, got to make it fast." I said as I ran from the house and back to Shadow.

I tried to skid to a stop but fell to my side. I quickly got up and ran to him as he laid there still. "I've got you, bud. You don't worry about a thing." He groaned again. "I know, bud. I've had Nadder poison in me, too. It's not fun."

I began to apply the herbs and I felt someone next to me, I looked over and saw Toothless. He was usually there whenever Shadow got hurt and helped lick his wounds as he began to do right now.

"Thanks for the help, Toothless. You're amazing." I said as I continued to apply the herbs and Toothless continued to lick Shadow's wounds.

"Okay, and there. You might want to go to Hiccup now, Toothless. More than likely they'll be going after Heather. As much as I'd like to hunt her down and punch her in the jaw for doing this, I have to stay and take care of the poor boy." I said and rubbed Toothless's nose gently. He purred and ran off to get Hiccup.

"You'll be okay, Shadow. I promise." I said quietly and placed a kiss on top of his wide head.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>I am so sorry for hurting Shadow again but he would have been able to go after the book and be able to successfully catch it since he's faster than Toothless due to him still having a full tail.<strong>

## 20. Heather Report Pt 2

\*\*Ami: Thank you!\*\*

\*\*BloodBendingDancer: I'M SORRY! D'=-\*\*

\*\*Iron-Mantis: I'd like to thank you for your notes but I just couldn't fit enough of Slade in this chapter. Sorry but I do

appreciate it.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>After one, painfully long hour, I saw Shadow up and moving like he was good as new. He shook his head like a dog would do and a shudder ran through his body and he pounced towards me but didn't tackle me.</p>

"Are you sure that you should be up and about?" I asked carefully. He perked his ears and tilted his head with his eyes sparkling adorably. "I'd really feel better if you lie down right now. I don't want you to get hurt any more than you already have."

He stared at me briefly then shook himself again with a gentle huff. He warbled quietly and pounced on me, tackling me this time and throwing me onto my back.

"Ow." I groaned. "What did I do to you?" I asked and thought about the Nadder spines. "Nevermind. I probably deserved that." He gave me a huffing laughter and licked me. "Yep, Shades. I love you, too, bud."

Hm, now that I think about it, Toothless has licked Shadow's wounds and they begin to heal quickly; quicker than they normally would. Could their saliva have healing properties?

I decided to dwell on the question later since I saw Hiccup come in, he looked rather displeased and betrayed. "Heather, I can't believe it."

Since I still didn't know what completely went on due to me tending to Shadow's wounds, I sat up and asked. "What?"

"Okay, Al, listen but you can't kill her, got it?" He pointed at me. I nodded in response. "All right. Well, Al, she took the Book of Dragons and Stormfly so she could go to Outcast Island. I tried to go for the book but I was too late. I wasn't fast enough. If Shadow had been there--"

"Heather had Stormfly attack Shadow." I interupted darkly.

His eyes widened then narrowed with betrayal even more. "This is just... ugh, I can't believe it." He shook his head and put a hand in front of his face. "I was so stupid. Why couldn't I have just listened to you and Astrid in the first place?"

"It's okay. You were oblivious. You didn't know and I don't blame you." I said comfortingly and when he turned to me with a fake smile, I finished with "Dummy."

"Yeah, this is really not helping." His fake smile fell.

"Okay, I apologize." I put my hands up in defense then my eyes were drawn to his left arm that he'd been holding for quite a bit. "What happened there? Are you hurt? Okay, I'm going to--"

"Al, don't." He put his hurt hand up to stop me.

"Well, at least let me wrap that thing up. I don't think it would for

the best to leave an open wound. Besides, I owe you after you fixed up my Cauldron burn." I said and got out some aloe vera. "Now either roll up your sleeve or take off the tunic so I can put this on."

He sighed after I got him patched up and sat down, "We still have Heather. We locked her up in one of the cells."

"Ooh, fun. So she can just sit down like a good little girl and wait for her timeout to finish?" I asked sarcastically. "I don't know if you've noticed but Berk cells aren't really good for holding prisoners, especially if you have Bucket on watch."

"Well, Astrid's on watch right now." He informed. "And unlike all those other times, we have dragons."

"Also, I have a feeling that the only reason I'm not in one of those cells for my confession is because I'd have Shadow bust that whole wall down."

"Oh, I'll bet." Hiccup rolled his eyes.

"So, what's the idea for getting the book back? Surely, you can't just barge in there and just kick some tail. You need a plan." I folded a leg over the other and flipped some hair out of my face.

"Well, we're going to start our training after a while. I don't know how long it'll take but we'll have to train quickly. The longer they have that book, the more time they get to read its contents and-"

"Hiccup, I get it. You guys go get to training right away, I need to make sure that Shadow's as fine as he says he is." I said then glanced into Shadow's direction, his tail wagged and he looked at me curiously.

"Okay, if he's all right then come on down to the academy and we'll see what we can do for him. If he can come that is." He finished and left. "You still have to promise that you won't hurt Heather. Traitor or not."

"I promise to not harm Heather." I said.

\* \* \*

><p>"Astrid, please. I have to get back to Outcast Island." I heard Heather beg as I walked down the hall. I stopped in my tracks and listened closely.</p>

\_I'll bet.\_ I thought.

"Yeah, I bet you do." Astrid said.

"You don't understand! Alvin has my parents!" She pleaded.

"Oh, yeah?" Astrid asked skeptically in Heather's direction. "What happened to the pirates?"

Heather sighed heavily. "There were never any pirates. I made it up. But I had to. I needed you to trust me." She said a bit

desperately.

"Well, guess what? We don't. Not anymore." Astrid had responded and walked past me. "Al, let's go." She pulled on me.

"I have Heather's food." I pulled away. "I'll be there in a bit. I promise."

"Fine." She let go. "Just hurry up. We have to get back to training as soon as possible, got it?" I nodded and she left.

I walked to Heather's cell, unlocked and opened the door and handed her the food. Afterwards, shutting the door and locking it again.

"You're here to mock me, aren't you?" She sighed while staring down at the food.

"Heather, please. I'm cruel but I'm not that cruel." I put a hand on my hip. "All I did was bring you your food. I know that you've only seen the cruel side of me so far but I made a promise to Hiccup that I wouldn't hurt you and I'm a Viking of my word." There was a moment of silence and I finished with "Enjoy your food." Then I left.

\* \* \*

><p>Snotlout fired a rock at me with a catapult, Shadow did a spiral and burst out of the way with his incredible Night Fury speed. Shadow turned and didn't hesitate to fire back with his plasma blast, he flew down towards Snotlout and tossed him to the side with his head and flew back towards the top of the arena.</p>

"Good thing that you're better, bud." I patted his head and he let out a focused growl.

Soon enough, Snotlout got back on the catapult and fired a rock towards Meatlug, she turned and swallowed it but Fishlegs didn't look at all pleased with what happened. "Hey! That was a \_ little\_ close Snotlout!"

"Quit whining, Fishlegs." Snotlout mocked.

Fishlegs allowed Meatlug to fire at Snotlout and he had barely dodged that. Snotlout got up and dusted himself off. "Hey, cut it out!"

"Quit whining, Snotlout." Fishlegs mocked.

"Nice job, guys." Hiccup praised. "But remember, the Outcasts aren't going to be coming one at a time."

"Don't remind me. We're under enough stress." Fishlegs said.

"Remember, we only have one shot at getting the Book of Dragons back."

"Um, did I not make myself clear about the stress?" Fishlegs asked.

Barf and Belch flew down as Barf breathed his gas along the ground and Belch lit it. The flame from their combination flew towards Hookfang and Snotlout but Snotlout had rolled away.

"Too early, Snotlout. You have to time it perfectly." Astrid said.

"It wasn't me! It was them." He gestured to the twins.

"Uh, sorry." Ruffnut said.

"Yeah, still working on the kinks." Tuffnut followed then the two chuckled.

Hookfang was riled up about the fire moving towards him and was on fire. He was growling and snapping his jaws around. Astrid gestured to the Nightmare. "Could you calm him down?"

"Fine, whatever." Snotlout said. He walked over to Hookfang, grabbed his horns and bent them to the ground. Hookfang seemed to be enjoying it with his tongue hanging out of his mouth and calming down immediately. "Figured that one out yesterday. He likes it."

"Uh, he likes having his horns bent to the ground?" Fishlegs asked after landing Meatlug.

"Tuffnut does." Ruffnut said.

"I do?" He asked. Not a moment later, Ruffnut tackled him off of Belch and onto the ground. She had hold of the horns on Tuffnut's helmet and had his face against the ground. He didn't seem to mind it all too much. "Oh, yeah. That does feel kind of nice. The dirt's soft."

"What dirt? This is stone." I asked and Shadow patted a paw against the ground so I wouldn't have to get off and do it myself.

"Can we get on with it?" Astrid asked. "There could be a whole army coming at us."

"Well? We're waiting." Snotlout said after he got back on Hookfang.

Stormfly flew into the air and Hookfang breathed fire along the ground. "Spines, Stormfly. Now!" Astrid called and spines flew off of Stormfly and through the fire. The spines caught fire and hit the wall behind the twins, all except for one that would have hit Tuffnut in the forehead but thanks to his helmet, he was safe.

"Huh. I kind of like that, too." Tuffnut said and smiled at Ruffnut. "Make a note."

"That's going to work great." Hiccup said, regarding the flaming Nadder spines.

"All of this training is nice once we have the book but Alvin's just not going to hand it over to us." Fishlegs said.

"No but maybe Alvin will hand it to Heather." Astrid said.

I got off of Shadow's back and stood with them.

"Uh, I think Astrid's been eating dragon nip again." Fishlegs whispered and got elbowed by Astrid. "Ow! Why is it always violence with you?!"

"It's not violence, it's communication." She grinned. "Watch." She said then right after she did, she punched me in my shoulder blade.

"Okay, what's the right word for this? Oh yeah, ow!" I rubbed my shoulder blade. I looked her up and down then kicked her in the shin and she rubbed where I had just kicked.

"See?" She asked Fishlegs. "Communication."

"You two are turning into the twins." Fishlegs commented.

"So, you're suggesting we let Heather go?" Hiccup asked to draw attention away from the current conversation.

"Something like that." Astrid said and let her leg go.

"Yep, dragon nip." Fishlegs shrugged and got punched in the stomach.

"Wait. Fishlegs said that you ate dragon nip again?" I asked and looked at Astrid with a cocked brow.

"So?" She asked and folded her arms.

"I don't have a problem with it. I've had dragon nip before." I rose my hand.

"Al, wha- nevermind." Hiccup shook his head.

"It tasted like garlic." I shrugged. "I have to admit that it was pretty good, though."

"Oh, so dragons like you for your breath." Fishlegs said. I looked towards Astrid and she nodded then kicked him in the shin. "Ow! I didn't even say anything to you this time, Astrid!"

\* \* \*

><p>So late that night, we were loading up a small boat that we would send 'Heather' back on with anything she might need and whatnot. Fishlegs spoke up soon enough, "This is- this is gonna w-work, right? Beaus-se if it doesn't work, Alvin will know all our dragon secrets and if Alvin knows about our dragon secrets-</p>

"Fishlegs." Hiccup put a hand on his shoulder to calm him down and it worked quite effectively since he immediately shut up. "It'll work." He reassured then we looked off towards where we saw 'Heather.' "Oh, that must be-" He didn't get to finish.

"Heather!" Ruffnut shouted.

"Get her!" Tuffnut and Ruffnut dropped their boxes and the two ran for her. 'Heather' put her hands up but they tackled her

regardless. "You must stay here. Stay! How many times do we have to tell you?" Then he got punched in the face along with Ruffnut being shoved aside. 'Heather' sat up.

"It's me, you mutton-heads." Astrid said.

"Wow." Snotlout said.

"Ooh." Fishlegs shuddered.

Astrid dusted herself off and Tuffnut said "Uh, sorry, Astrid. Totally unconvincing."

"Oh, yeah. I could tell."

"Are you sure about this?" Hiccup asked after Astrid had got on the boat.

"No but it's our only chance."

"We'll be shadowing you from the sky." He said and Shadow perked his ears up. "No, Shadow, not you." Shadow nodded.

"I don't need shadowing." Astrid said and once again, Shadow's ears had perked up. "Not you, Shadow." He looked a little irritated and laid his ears against his head with a groan.

"Just in case, you know. It'll make us feel better." He said and nudged me. I nodded.

She smiled at us with her eyes sparkling a bit then her usual tough self came out. "Fine, just stay out of sight because if Alvin sees you, it'll all be over."

"Don't worry about us. Just get the book and get out of there, we'll be waiting." He said. She smiled and Fishlegs pushed the boat into the water.

"Good luck and be safe." I said quietly to her. She apparently still heard me since she nodded and waved, I waved back. "Okay, gang. Let's pack up and head off."

"I'm not sure about this plan Hiccup." Fishlegs said after a while.

"And this is where Hiccup says—" I began then Hiccup and I said in unison, "If you have another one, I'm open."

"I just think that landing in a wild dragon nesting ground is really going to freak Meatlug out." Fishlegs said. She didn't look freaked out; she gave a happy growl and grinned the whole way through.

"Yeah, she looks terrified." I remarked.

"Really? Well, how does she feel about flaming arrows and catapults?" Hiccup asked.

"Uh, yeah. She really doesn't like those either." He said.

"Oh, you don't say." Hiccup said.

"Tell you what, Fishlegs," Snotlout began. "When we get there, you just lay back and let the real dragons do the work." He said.

"Uh, yeah. You really have no idea what an angry swarm of wild dragons are capable of." He said.

"Want to bet?" I asked but got no response.

"You want to know what would be awesome?" Tuffnut asked as the two pulled in close behind Fishlegs so they could psych him out.

"Flaming arrows, catapults—" Ruffnut said then was joined by Tuffnut, "\_And\_ wild dragons." They flew away from Fishlegs after that.

"That makes three of you." Fishlegs said as he was still very psyched out.

Then later on, we were almost about to land on Outcast Island so Hiccup turned to Fishlegs. "Fishlegs, you see this? You got yourself all worked up for nothing."

"Okay." Hiccup began as he saw the wild dragons coming out. "Guys, remember, stick to the plan! No matter how crazy it gets."

"Crazy? I love crazy! Bring it!" Snotlout said. "Wait, what's the plan again?"

"Now!" Hiccup called. "Fire!" Then we all dropped our fish so the wild dragons would avert their attention from us and go after the fish, it worked effectively and they dove for the fish instead of us.

"Sweet." Fishlegs said.

"Yes! We did it! Stupid dragons." Snotlout said.

"Hey, take that back." I defended then saw a Nadder lift Snotlout off of Hookfang all because he had a fish in his hand that he didn't want to let go.

Hiccup and Toothless raced to get him and after a short argument, Snotlout reluctantly let go of the fish he held and landed on Toothless.

"Odin's beard, Snotlout." I sighed irritably as we kept flying.

After landing on Outcast Island, Snotlout began to call like a bird. Or at least, he tried to.

"What in the name of Thor are you doing? Are you sick or something?" I asked as I sat next to Shadow with my legs folded.

"Duh, Alyssa. It's our signal." He shrugged.

I smacked a hand to my forehead and Shadow let out a groan as he rolled his deep green eyes. "Guys, we don't give the signal this

time. Astrid does. How many times do we have to talk about this?"

"Like any of this matters anyway?" Fishlegs asked. "She's almost an hour late. Oh, we never should have let her go. Alvin must have figured out what was going on and—" He stopped and gasped.

"Yeah, that's the spirit." I said sarcastically.

"Her costume sucked. I told you guys." Tuffnut said.

"Yet you were the first one to jump on her." I began to rub Shadow's head.

"Guys, she'll be here. It's Astrid." He tried to convince but didn't look too convinced himself.

"I'm positive that she'll be fine." I said and laid back on Shadow, he laid his head down next to my lap so I could continue petting him which I did for quite a while and after seeing Hiccup stand, I sat up and Shadow stood with a soft growl.

"That's Astrid." Hiccup said.

"Who's that with her?" I cocked a brow.

"I was going to ask the same question." Fishlegs rose his hand.

"I don't know." Hiccup said. Astrid waved and that was our signal. "Okay, that's the signal." He got on Toothless. "Okay, let's go, bud. Al, you and Shadow already know what to do."

"Way ahead of you." I responded and got on Shadow's back. He followed Hiccup and Toothless for a bit then hid behind a bunch of boulders. He laid low and stayed absolutely quiet.

"Oy, there they are! Get 'em!" Alvin called. I was able to see through the pile of boulders without being seen myself. Outcasts surrounded Hiccup and Alvin stepped up to speak with him. "Hey there, Hiccup. Bet you're surprised to see me."

"Eh, not really. This is where you live." Toothless growled and Hiccup patted him gently. "Easy, bud. Looks like he's got us this time."

"Hiccup, where's the Hudson lass that's always clinging to ya, it seems? Shouldn't she be here with you? I'm sure her father would love to see her again."

"Screw him." I whispered and Shadow growled. "Easy."

"She's not here with me. She said the stress of coming to Outcast Island was too much so she stayed behind."

Slade cackled. "Well, that should have been expected. She's weak, nothing but an ignorant fool!"

I felt anger boil inside of me faster than the speed of a Night Fury. I wanted to attack right now and Shadow felt it, too. He wanted to go out there and attack, he wanted to burn all of them and I could feel

it.

Hiccup didn't look like he took too kindly to what Slade had said either and had a firm glare plastered on his face.

"Anyway, Hiccup," Alvin broke that conversation. "With this book, your dragon knowledge and my knowledge of warfare; we could make one team. How's that sound?"

"Uh, insane, demented, delusional, stupid." He listed as if it was obvious, which it was.

"All right, we'll just have to agree to disagree." Alvin said.  
"You're a smart boy, Hiccup. I can't let you leave the island."

"You're a smart, murderous barbarian, Alvin. You know I have a better plan than this."

"Oh, aye?"

"Now!" Hiccup called.

"Now!" Alvin called.

Shadow burst from where he hid behind the rocks and dove towards Alvin but once he saw Slade, he turned his attention towards him. I don't know what he was thinking but I couldn't turn him away. He stayed focused on Slade.

Slade pulled out an axe and readied it, Shadow's eyes turned wide but stayed in their threatening slits. He fired at the axe and shot it out of his hand then tackled him to the ground. I pulled my sword and pointed it down towards him. "Miss me?"

"Ah, I knew that you weren't too far so no. I didn't miss you in the least. You can't stay away from who you truly are." He said and I was distracted momentarily but Shadow noticed and pulled up to get me away from him even though he had a clear chance of finishing him off.

"I was born and raised on Berk, it doesn't matter who my parents are!" I shouted and Shadow began to fly away from there, he must have felt the tension in the air. "Plasma blast!"

Shadow hesitated since he knew that I wasn't sticking to the plan and fired at a group of Outcasts that surrounded Hookfang. I heard the clink of a crossbow being fired and Shadow spiraled and dashed from the area. We returned to the ground and Shadow growled fiercely.

"There's too many of them!" Snotlout shouted.

"Shadow, fire!" I demanded and he fired at the Outcasts that stood in front of us but thanks to their shields, they weren't hit. "Shoot." I snapped my fingers and Shadow fired again but once again, hit nothing but shield.

"Al, watch out!" Hiccup called but in the middle of his call, Shadow was blown to the side and he snarled. A bola wrapped around him. I

was sent flying off of him and landed on the ground, scraping against it a bit.

"I've got you now." Slade said and pulled his axe out again. "Now, don't run and we'll all be just fine."

I looked around and reached for my sword that was a short distance away from me, he stomped on my wrist and I winced. Warm liquid ran down my wrist due to the rugged bottom of his boots. "Nice try."

Shadow growled and attempted to fire but an Outcast wrapped their arms around his mouth and prevented him from doing so. He struggled against the grip and growled deeply.

The shadow of a Deadly Nadder flew overhead. The Nadder lifted the net that went over Fishlegs, fired at the ropes that were tied around Barf and Belch's neck, used its talons to cut the ropes around Shadow and now gave him free range.

"Is that—" Astrid asked but didn't finish.

"Yeah!" Heather called.

"Heather." Hiccup said.

"Stormfly!" Astrid said.

"What? Heather?" Alvin asked.

Shadow's free range gave him the freedom of moving his body, regardless of the Outcast holding his mouth shut. He flew into the air briefly and slammed the Outcast against the ground and flew towards Slade, a shield rose up but nothing happened.

After only a second or two, Shadow pried the shield away from him with his mouth and threw it away. He threw him aside with his head and snarled. I got back on with my sword in hand, "All right."

Shadow flew into the air and stayed close with the others. "All right, guys, just like we practiced!" Hiccup said. "Ruffnut, cover fire."

"It's about time." She said and the Zippleback dove. She released Barf's gas and Belch, soon after, lit the gas and made the trademark, Zippleback explosion.

A large rock flew towards Meatlug and Hiccup called, "Fishlegs, incoming!" The rock was roughly about the size of Meatlug's head but she was still able to open her mouth and swallow the rock with no trouble at all.

"Whoa. Nice catch, girl. Lava blast!" He said.

"Shadow, dash and spin." I ordered; seeing how there was a barrage of arrows flying towards us. He made no hesitation and did as I had ordered, "Now, plamsa blast." I said. He fired just above the Outcasts with the crossbows and rocks fell down towards them. "Nice!" I patted his head.

After only a few seconds more of fighting, Hiccup approached us on Toothless. "All right, good job, guys. Let's get out of here."

We flew away from Outcast Island and I looked at the cuts on my wrist from Slade's rugged boots. "That's going to leave a mark." I remarked. "Oh, well."

Then I saw Astrid fall off Stormfly and I clenched my jaw since I saw Savage falling with her. "Okay, our work here isn't done. Let's go, bud!"

Shadow and I flew towards her but ran into Hiccup and Toothless, literally. "Ow! Sorry about that."

"Sorry, sorry."

"All right, let's go." We both ordered at the same time and followed Alvin as he began to carry Astrid away. The two Night Furies fired away at Alvin but kept missing and soon, we ran him towards a cliff and sure enough, deadly rocks down below.

"Surrender! Or..." He chuckled, "Well, you know."

"Do it, bud." Hiccup said.

"No." I ordered.

"Why not?"

"We might hurt Astrid."

"She's right, Hiccup. Don't shoot." Astrid added in and right after that, a Monsterous Nightmare came over the cliff and attacked Alvin or at least, threw him aside. Astrid grabbed the Book of Dragons and got on the Nightmare, then we finally flew off.

"Who is that?" Hiccup asked.

"Just a new friend I made." Astrid said.

\* \* \*

><p>"I can't thank you enough, especially you, Astrid." Heather said but her gratitude was more towards Hiccup and Astrid, seeing how most of what I did was threaten her. "You put your life on the line for us. I'll never forget that." She hugged Astrid and took her by surprise but she hugged back after overcoming the shock, which was about only a second or two.<p>

Heather released Astrid and Hiccup opened his arms for a hug when Heather moved his way but she actually moved in for Toothless. "I'm gonna miss you." She said and pet his head. "Both of you." Hiccup's arms were still open then they fell to his sides.

"Ah, who knows? Maybe we'll see each other again sometime." Hiccup said.

"Maybe we will."

"I know that you and I aren't the best of friends but could just promise me one thing; if you need help again, you'll ask." I said, Shadow let out a low trill following.

"I will. I promise." She said then went onto the boat. As it drifted away, she waved and swore that I could have heard Snotlout say 'Write me.'

"Are you sure you know how to read?" I asked from across the dock. He turned and glared at me with fire in his eyes.

"How did you even hear that?" He shouted.

"I don't know." I hummed and shrugged. "Now, aren't you two supposed to have a race? You haven't had one in a while." I asked Hiccup and Astrid. "I think that I'd like to keep time."

"Oh, sure. Come on, Astrid." Hiccup said and the two left the docks before I did. I couldn't help but to look back at the sea as the boat drifted away and smile.

Heather was afraid and she didn't know how else to get her mother and father out of Outcast Island and when people are afraid, they will say and do things that they don't mean.

"Al, are you coming or not?" Astrid called.

"Yeah, just a second!" I called back and smiled at the boat once again. "Good-bye, Heather. Good luck and be safe. Truthful, too."

## 21. Thawfest

\*\*Iron-Mantis: I am glad that you undrrstand. \*Reads the \_Defenders of Berk \_part, hurriedly goes to YouTube and watches trailer\* Oh yeah! Awesome! Thanks for telling me! =D\*\*

\*\*BloodBendingDancer: Yep! \*\*

"Hey, Al, what'cha doing?" Hiccup asked. I looked at him and saw that he was heavily sweating, his face was red and he looked pretty tired. He was breathing a bit heavily as well.

"Cutting firewood. Thawfest training, huh?" I asked and swung the axe down and cut a piece of wood in half. "You look really beat. If you want some water, there's some over there." I made a head gesture to the stump of wood that I had my cup sitting on.

"Thanks." He said. He went over and took a drink from the cup, wiped his mouth and set it back down. "Yeah, with Thawfest being tomorrow, Gobber is running me into the ground. Please tell me you're participating this year." He panted and sat down.

"Sorry, Hiccup. I'm not." I replied and swung the axe down again then kicked the wood out of the way. "Hic, I haven't participated in Thawfest for two years. Why would I start up again now?"

"Because they're allowing dragons this year." He said and I pulled the axe back to swing it down but when those words hit my ears, I

dropped it behind me. I turned to Hiccup quickly.

"Do what now?" I asked.

"I knew that would get your attention." He chuckled. "So, what do you think now? You gonna participate now? The other competitions are going to be the same but then we're going to have three extra challenges for our dragons. If you and I could beat the dragon parts at least, then we could compete against Snotlout."

"And each other." I added. "It doesn't feel right competing against you, Hiccup."

"Are you kidding? I doubt that the competition would be serious." He said.

"Hiccup, no." I answered. "I don't want to enter Thawfest."

"Okay." He sang. "If you don't enter Thawfest, it'll be awful lonely around there and I'll have no one to talk to or encourage me." He sighed and looked at me with sad eyes. He was trying to make me feel bad so I'd enter and it was working.

"Hiccup, you know that I hate when you do those sad, puppy eyes." I sighed.

"I'm not trying to make puppy eyes, the tears are welling up and making me look this way."

"Odin's beard." I sighed. "Fine, this year I'll join. If nothing to make you happy."

"Well, it worked." He smiled. "All right, rest up tonight so you can participate tomorrow. It'll be a last minute entry but I'm sure that they'll allow one of the heads of Berk dragon training academy to slide."

\* \* \*

><p>I sat back against a wall with Shadow sitting by my side. I looked over all of the paintings on the wall and since mine was last minute; it was sloppy and a bit messy but I didn't mind. I was here to play a game and that's pretty much what I plan on doing.</p>

"Let the Thaw Festival games begin!" Stoic announced then as a new tradition, I suppose, released a rainbow of Terrible Terrors. I saw one of them fly into the audience and steal some guy's chicken leg.

"Who are we?" Spitelout asked.

"Killers!" Snotlout responded.

"What do we do?!"

"We kill!"

"What do we say?!"

"Snotlout, Snotlout! Oy, oy, oy!" They chanted. I swear that that

might be one of the most annoying cheers I've ever heard.

"Pleasant." I said sarcastically and stepped up. "Might as well get this thing over with. Not like we're going to win. It'll be fun to just play the game."

"The contestants are lining up for the sheep lug." Mulch announced.

"It's a good day for lugging sheep, Mulch." Bucket said.

Mulch chuckled. "Why, Bucket, everyday's a good day for lugging sheep."

I yawned tiredly then a sheep was roughly dropped onto my shoulders. "Hey, at least warn me next time." I shifted a bit and held the sheep by the legs. "Wow, I haven't seen a Thawfest game in a while either. I hardly remember what the other competitions are."

The bang of Mulch's hook against Bucket's bucket sent us running but of course, Snotlout would be the winner. My sheep bit me and jumped off when my grip had unexpiciably loosened and caused me to let go of it, the twins were arguing again, Fishlegs fell to his knees, Astrid was nowhere to be seen and Hiccup tripped and fell to the ground.

I rubbed a hand over where the sheep had bit me and looked at it, no blood or anything. Either way, it still hurt.

"Right where you belong, down at my feet." Snotlout said to Hiccup. I began to walk towards them. "Let me help you." He held a hand out to Hiccup and this caused me to narrow my eyes. As soon as Hiccup reached up for his hand, Snotlout pulled back. "Whoops! Too slow!" He laughed and walked away.

"I've got you." I said and lifted Hiccup to his feet after he grabbed my hand.

"I really should've seen that coming." He said.

"Mm-hmm. Anyway, we still have a game to play."

"Next is our traditional log roll event." Mulch announced.

"Enjoy your face-plant." Snotlout said then it began.

All of us ran on the log and the first one off was surprisingly Astrid but that was only due to Fishlegs flailing his arms around and he was off next. The twins got twisted around the log and Hiccup went flying off.

Snotlout looked towards me and smirked as if to say I was next, I glared and as revenge for what happened to Hiccup, I ran backwards instead of forwards, he hadn't expected this and slid off.

I couldn't believe it. I was the last one standing.

"Aye, she cheated!" Spitelout yelled and Stoic looked towards me.

"No one ever said that you had to run forwards." I replied. "I was merely playing the game."

After a few seconds of consideration, a mark was actually made next to my picture. My eyes widened, I honestly didn't think that my excuse for sending Snotlout flying would have actually worked.

Snotlout looked towards me and glared, I shrugged. "Apologies but if you didn't send Hiccup flying, like you did, I wouldn't have done that." I looked around, "Speaking of Hiccup... oh!"

I saw him down in the burlap sacks, kicking his legs in the air since his head and chest were stuck in the piles of burlap. "Hold on, I've got you." I said and walked over to him, grabbed him around the stomach with my arms and hefted him out.

"Thanks, Al." He muttered and I set him on his feet. He shook his head and looked towards the scoreboard, "Huh? You mean that you- how did-"

"I ran backwards instead of forwards. It made Snotlout slip and fall."

"Well, congratulations!" He shook my hand with a smile on his face. "Good job."

"I only did it because of you." I said.

"Aw, Al." He sighed.

"The next event is the axe throwing contest where accuracy is supreme." Mulch announced.

I looked at the axe in my hand and studied it briefly. "Okay." I readied myself for the throw and tossed it but it didn't go anywhere near the target. It flew up into the air. "Uh-oh." I said. "This won't end well."

The axe came plummeting back down but due to its speed, I couldn't move quickly enough. I didn't get hurt either, thanks to the plasma blast of a certain Night Fury. "Thanks, Shadow." I smiled. "You're a life-saver."

He smiled at me from across the arena and lied back down with a yawn. The look he gave me said 'It's what I do.' That only made my smile grow.

Hiccup tossed his axe and it landed on the ground in front of the target, it was so close, too.

"Here's how it's done, dragon siblings." He commented.

"I'm still holding an axe." I warned. He began to toss the axes with his back turned and somehow he still managed to hit them all, just about perfectly.

"Show off." Hiccup mumbled.

"Why don't you give us the medal now, Stoic?" Spitelout stood and laughed. "Save your boy the embarrassment."

"Why don't you take a seat, Spitelout?" Stoic responded and the other Vikings 'ooh'ed as Spitelout sat back down.

"Jorgenson's are freaking rude, I swear." I muttered and patted the axe in my hand. "Next rude comment that flies out of either of their mouths, I'm going to take this axe and stick it up their-"

"Dead last." Hiccup said and pried me from what I was saying. He was looking at his own picture as he didn't have any marks next to it.  
"But either way, I'm glad that you actually got a point, Al. Must be nice."

"Hmm." I hummed. It didn't feel nice, I only won it because of Hiccup.

"It doesn't matter if I have all the points or not; I've still got the best looking picture instead of... whatever that is." He gestured to my last minute picture. "What is that anyway? A Gronckle's behind?"

"It's what's on the inside that counts." I said.

"Oh, Al, let him have his fun today. Tomorrow, everything changes." He patted my shoulder and we began to walk off towards the dragons.

"Can't wait. With Hookfang and I, it's like boy and dragon have become one." Snotlout said. "We're like a bragon or a droy or a Snotfang!" He said and flew off with Hookfang.

"Yeah? Well, tomorrow you're gonna have to deal with Hic-tooth..." He said and punched into one of his palms.

"Or Toothcup." I said. "Then there's Shadyssa and Alow. Or would it be Aldow? Maybe-"

"Really? You guys are giving out some weird names." Astrid said.

"Yeah, not our snappiest comebacks." Hiccup shrugged.

"Why are you two getting yourselves caught up in this?" She asked.

"Because for the first time ever, I have a chance to beat Snotlout." Hiccup said. "Quiet him down."

Then he flew over doing that dumb chant again, "Snotlout, Snotlout! Oy, oy, oy!"

"Shut up!" I yelled.

"And why are you getting caught up in this, Al?"

"Because I have to help Hiccup as much as I can." I replied. "You should know that."

"I will admit, it would be nice to see someone else win the Thawfest medal." Astrid said and flew off on Stormfly.

"You've spiked your last sheep, Snotfang, tomorrow's a new day." Hiccup whispered a bit sinisterly.

"Whoa." I gasped. "That was intense, bud."

"You mean that was out loud?"

"Yeah."

"Well, let's just go. I have to work with Toothless, I'm sure that you and Shadow have plenty of work to do, too."

"Actually, I don't have a clue on what the dragon rounds are." I shrugged.

"Okay, Al, I'll explain it when we get home. Let's go, okay?" He patted my shoulder.

"Okay."

\* \* \*

><p>"Hurdles? I could go over those things in my sleep." Snotlout said.</p>

"Be my guest." Hiccup invited.

"You don't go over them, Snotlout, you go under them." Astrid explained.

"Seriously, dragons can fly and the roof of the academy is off. It'll be a bit too easy to fly over the hurdles, Snotlout." I said and Shadow shifted; waiting for his turn impatiently.

"Duh, I knew that." He said. Hookfang looked over and Toothless and growled at him, Toothless growled back. Shadow in defense for Toothless, stood up and snarled in Hookfang's direction.

Now, normally, Shadow and Hookfang get along. Just as long as me, Toothless or Hiccup aren't messed with. And Hookfang pushed Shadow by growling at Toothless.

Hookfang was taken aback slightly since he hadn't been expecting Shadow to growl back at him then turned away with a huff and growl. He shook his head and shifted his weight.

"Let it go, bud." I patted Shadow and he breathed deeply.

"And first up is Fishlegs." Mulch announced then hit Bucket's bucket.

Fishlegs and Meatlug didn't go too far. They got stuck under the first hurdle.

Then Astrid went, Stormfly flew under the hurdles like pro for only a moment then she turned her head a bit and hit the hurdles.

Ruffnut and Tuffnut went but due to the Zippelback moving his heads in snake-like motions when flying, the two heads ended up on different sides of the hurdles and the dragon stopped only when it rammed into the hurdle. The twins flew off their Zippelback and into the audience but they were okay.

"Where's your book, guys? You might want to take notes." Snotlout asked, laughed and flew under the hurdles with Hookfang. Let's just say that he didn't get a perfect score due to his head hitting each hurdle that the two flew under.

"Well, Al. Go on." Hiccup gestured for me to go.

"Right." I said. Shadow flew a bit then I nudged him and he reluctantly bucked upwards, hitting me against a hurdle and knocking me off. I sat up and held my head a bit then stared in Hiccup's direction.

"You okay?" He asked.

"Fine. Not even a scratch." I responded and moved out of the way so he could go. Shadow looked at me curiously, I shrugged. "I guess I wasn't thinking, bud. Sorry about that."

"What happened in there? That shouldn't have happened." Astrid said when we joined her side.

"Well, it did." I sighed. "I don't know. Shadow must have had a muscle spasm or something."

Finally, Hiccup's turn. He turned Toothless upside down and flew under the hurdles like that and joined the rest of us. "And Hiccup gets a perfect score!" Mulch announced.

"Did you hear what he said? 'Perfect!' I-I believe those are my first Thawfest points ever." He said and I rose a brow at him. He's never acted this way before. "I just realized something; I like beating Snotlout. I feel taller. Am I taller? Nevermind, don't answer that."

I looked at him with my mouth slightly agape and he glanced towards me then sat so he could look at me completely. "Did you see that? They cheered... for me!"

"Yeah, I noticed." I nodded and looked away from him.

"Uh, is he gloating?" Fishlegs asked.

"I don't know. I've never actually seen Hiccup gloat." Astrid responded then the two looked at me. "Well?"

"He's not gloating. He's just happy that he finally won something for once." I said as I tried to convince them. I think it was more for me than them.

I was pried from my thoughts when Snotlout finally landed with the rest of us, "Don't get too excited. You know what this is?" He held up two fingers. "The number I need to end this thing. And not to mention that I have the same amount of chances I have at it and I doubt that either of you will be able to pull off another win."

"And you know what this is?" Hiccup held his hand up and made a right with the tip of his index finger touching the tip of his thumb. "The size of your brain. Oh, wait." He made it much smaller, maybe only enough to where maybe one of his fingers could fit in. "That's much better."

"If he has one." I laughed with Hiccup.

"Like you've ever seen my brain." He glared.

Astrid glared at Hiccup and he shrugged. "What? He started it... when we were five."

"And that's kind of where I come in." I rose my hand.

"Dragon tricks, now, huh?" I rubbed Shadow's head. "I wish that I could think of something. Okay, nevermind, I have an idea." I quickly said.

Shadow and I went last. He flew us into the air, a quater of a mile off the ground. I stood up on his back, ran and jumped off of his neck but he didn't seem to really mind that. If he was uncomfortable with it, he would have shaken himself or let out a groan.

Anyway, I leapt off of his neck and plummeted towards the ocean. I watched as the icy water grew nearer and nearer, until... a black, leathery hide caught me before I hit the water and did an upward spiral while firing into the air and the plasma coming from Shadow's mouth was slightly spiraled as well.

"Whoo-hoo!" I threw a hand into the air. "Yeah, baby!"

I didn't see what my points for that one were and I didn't really care, either. That was fun to do all on its own and I might do it later just for fun.

"Way to go, Al! I was just behind you." Hiccup said. He normally doesn't involve himself like that, this is really going to his head.

"Yep." Was my response. "Good job, Hic. I'm sure that you'll get it next time."

"Yeah." He said hesitantly.

"Something wrong?"

"Oh, no. Nothing."

Yep, something's wrong. Hiccup's a terrible liar.

"Wow, Snotlout, your dad looks \_really\_ mad \_right now." Hiccup said after approaching him.

"What do you know? He always looks like that." Snotlout retorted. "Do you really think you have any shot at beating me?"

"As a matter of fact, I \_do\_ have a shot at beating you." Hiccup said.

"Do not."

"Do to."

"Do not!"

"Do to!" I rose my brows at this, I felt as if my friend was fading away and becoming some sort of stranger. This wasn't Hiccup. This wasn't who I grew up with. "Think about it; Toothless is a Night Fury and I'm the best rider. How could I possibly lose?"

He said 'I' this time. Ever since Hiccup and I met, it has always, always been 'us' and 'we'. What is he saying 'I' for? For sure, that should have been done for a long time ago.

"'Cause that's what you do! I win, you lose!" Snotlout said.

"Check the scoreboard, Snotlout. Not anymore." He smirked.

Snotlout stormed away; fuming and grunting. He made a bunch of incoherent noises and I sighed. Astrid approached Hiccup, "What was that all about?"

"Just rattling cages." He blew it off.

"Since when do you rattle cages?"

\* \* \*

><p>"Shadow, fire." I ordered as we saw Outcast cutouts popping up all around then a Viking couple holding each other. Shadow held back his fire but I gave him a nudge, "Fire." I whispered. He looked back at me curiously then fired. This made everyone gasp.</p>

"Shadow, what are you doing?" I asked out loud so that way the others would hear. He gave me a look of disbelief and I patted him, "Shadow, stick to the plan." I whispered. His eyes flickered with what I said since I told him this morning that this is what we're doing.

After we landed, Astrid looked towards me. "What was up back there? You did tell Shadow not to fire, right?"

"Right."

"Why did he still-"

"He's untrusting, remember?" I answered before she was finished and looked away.

After looking at all of the points and seeing how we all got two, all three of us were thrown up onto a stage and Mulch announced, "And for the first time in Thawfest history, we have a tie. No less, a three-way tie! Tomorrow, these young Vikings will go head-to-head in an event to decide... the Thawfest champion!"

We all waved to the cheering Vikings and the two were at it again. I'm not really in this game to win it. I entered because Hiccup kept begging me to.

After the two shared a short arguement, Snotlout turned around, grunted and kicked a bucket away before storming off. Hiccup called out to him, "Hey, what's the matter? Yak got your tongue?"

"Hiccup." Astrid scolded but he didn't notice.

"Oh, he's crumbling under the pressure, I can feel it." I walked down and joined his side. "What?" He asked after seeing the scolding look on Astrid's face.

"You know what I always liked about you, Hiccup? You were always a gracious loser. Who knew you were such a lousy winner?" She walked away and Hiccup gave me a look of disbelief.

"What is she talking about? There's nothing wrong with me. Is there?" He looked at me and I nodded.

"Yes, Hiccup. You've been kind of a jerk. 'Rattling cages' saying 'I' instead of 'us' or 'we'. Victory has been changing you. I began to let it slide since you hadn't won against Snotlout before but it's getting out of hand." I said. "Sorry. Now, I have to go. Shadow and I are overdue for an afternoon flight over the ocean."

\* \* \*

><p>"Just a race, huh? Toothless being a Night Fury, he's bound to be quicker than Hookfang." I said out loud. "Not to mention that Hiccup made a new tail last night for Toothless. Well, not a new tail but he thinned it out and made it more durable."</p>

"Who are you talking to?" Astrid asked.

"Myself." I said then looked in Stoic's direction. "Stoic, I'm dropping of the race."

"What?" He and Hiccup, who was standing next to me, asked.

"I'm dropping out." I repeated. "I joined this game for you, Hiccup. You asked me to join and I did, if victory is going to come between us then I don't want it. You and Snotlout can compete, I will not. Enjoy the games." I patted his shoulder and walked away.

I sat back and watched the race, I wasn't paying any mind to it except for the parts where Hiccup could have died and I was ready to jump into action at any second. There was when he began to fall on the cliff but thankfully, he used his leg to stop the plummeting. Then there a few other parts, most of them being during flight then I saw him suddenly pull back and fly down.

I rose my brows at this. Was he really doing what I think he was doing?

After Snotlout crossed the finish line, Hiccup and Toothless finally came through and I grinned at him. He did do what I thought he was doing.

"So, I see that you've improved your attitude." I smiled at him and pulled him into a one-armed hug. "Nice to see that you're back, Hiccup."

"What are you talking about?" He asked and Astrid joined us.

"We saw what you did."

"I don't know what you guys are talking about, Snotlout was just the better Viking today." He said and I held him a bit tighter then let him go and I'm glad I let go when I did.

"No, Hiccup. No one was a better Viking than you today." Astrid said and gave him a kiss.

That's why I'm glad I let go when I did. I could have been three inches away from that and now that distance increased to two and a half feet. I cleared my throat a bit and looked away a bit, "Nothing awkward about this." I said.

The two pulled away and in unison said "Al, shut up."

"Fine." I looked away from them. "Do what you gotta do."

"Okay, Astrid, let me talk to Al for a bit, okay?" I heard Hiccup ask.

"Sure thing." She said and I heard her feet hit the ground as she walked away.

"Al, you threw those two dragon challenges, didn't you?" He asked and came around to look at my face.

"No." I sighed. "Shadow spasmed and bucked me up into the hurdle the first round and in the Fly and Shoot event, Shadow was untrusting of all of the cutouts and it reflected on how he really feels towards people."

"Al, this sounds very believable and all but trust me, I know you better. You threw them for me, thanks. You turned me into a jerk for a while but thanks."

"Yeah." I replied awkwardly. "You're welcome. Though I don't see why you were so bent on winning. Whether you win or lose and it doesn't matter to who either, you're always a winner to me."

## 22. When Lightning Strikes

\*\*skyblu23: Thank you. : )\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Shadow stood curioiusly on one of the new perches that we made for the dragons. The perches were made because the dragons have been trying to rest up on the roofs but that had only resulted on them falling through the homes. But with these steel roosters and perches, they were able to rest up on them without breaking anything.</p>

He eyed it curiously and walked up and down it as if he was on patrol then leapt off and shook himself off. He looked back up at it then huffed quietly.

"Do you not like them?" I asked. He nodded but made it evident that

he'd much rather not use the perches and preferred to rest along the ground. "Okay, whatever makes you comfortable, bud." I pat his head.

Simply said; Ruffnut and Tuffnut weren't exactly happy with the perches. They were hoping that it would encourage the dragons to destroy more.

"Wait up, we made these things so stuff wouldn't break?" He asked.

"I don't understand you people." Ruffnut followed.

"And they tricked us into helping them build them. I feel so used... and sweaty." Tuffnut concluded and began to walk off with Ruffnut following just behind him.

"Oh, well. What are you gonna do?" I shrugged.

\* \* \*

><p>"Perches for dragons; some of your best work, men." Stoic said. I gave a look towards him and he shifted his gaze towards me. "And woman." I gave a smile then he lifted his cup and gave a look of slight disgust and disdain that was evident even through his beard. He sighed, "Although we made need to move the one over the well."</p>

Oh, that explains the face.

He showed Gobber and he looked inside of his own cup with shock. I wanted to laugh but instead, I only moved the cup across the table so Stoic and Gobber would pick up that I noticed the actions and conversation.

"The perches are just the beginning." Hiccup began and lifted his cup. "We could-"

My mind was racing a mile a minute and said 'No, Hiccup! There's dragon poo in there!'

Before I had time to react, Stoic put his hand over Hiccup's cup and his hand hit Hiccup in the mouth gently since he was still lifting the cup regardless but he showed no mind to this as he just put the cup back down and joyfully went on about what else we could do with the dragons.

I gave a sigh of relief as he continued talking. "We could build landing areas for them. Maybe even stables in the caves around the village and-"

"Easy, son." Stoic calmed him. "Remember, Berk is still for people."

"You know, he's just trying to be dragon friendly." I patted his shoulder. "I'd be doing the same thing."

"Still, Vikings before dragons." Gobber said. Toothless and Shadow looked towards him, Toothless gave him a look of confusion and worry while Shadow just looked pissed. "Yeah, I said it. Deal with

it."

Shadow gave a low growl, "Shadow, no." I ordered. He looked towards me then gave a harsh huff in Gobber's direction with smoke flying out through his nostrils and into his face. He leaned back to his fish and continued eating.

Toothless suddenly shot up after hearing lightning crack outside and ran upstairs. "Huh? Toothless?" I asked then we heard rumbling and cracking in the sky so we opened the door to check outside. Shadow followed behind me and stared out into the lightning storm.

"The lightning's hitting everywhere." Hiccup pointed out. It was true. The lightning hit countless perches and crackled through the sky.

"It doesn't usually strike here." Stoic said.

"Thor must be angry." Gobber said. "The only other time I ever remember lightning striking Berk-"

Stoic had joined in with Gobber to say the next part, "Barnstat."

"Uh, Barn-who?" Hiccup asked.

"Oh, Slade told me about him." I said. "Jorgern Barnstat. He sailed into town one day and stole from the eldery. One day, while he was fixing the mast on his ship to escape Berk, Thor punished him by striking him in the head. Then he said 'If you ever try and leave than Thor will do the same to you just like with your mother.'"

"Al, why didn't you ever tell me about that?"

"What? Barnstat or Slade?" I asked.

"The latter of the two."

"Oh, I thought that you'd figure as much." I shrugged. "And I know that Thor didn't punish mother, she was killed by a Monstorous Nightmare. If Thor wanted to kill my mother with a dragon than surely he'd have sent a Night Fury or a Skrill, seeing how they're both lightning related."

"Ah. I see." He said awkwardly.

"Anyway," Stoic cleared his throat, "By the time Thor was finished with him, our whole fleet was on fire."

"We sent him off the island and Thor hasn't hit the village since." Gobber said.

"Threw him off the island? Pretty harsh." Hiccup said.

"Well, still better than Slade's idea." I shrugged.

"Do I even want to ask?" Hiccup questioned himself.

"He wanted to tie him to a ship full of livestock so dragons could come and eat away at him." Stoic answered. "Horrible man. We were

very reasonable compared to him."

"Yikes." Hiccup pulled his shoulders back.

Lightning had begun hitting homes and setting them on fire. I saw Pebble running along the ground with the flames billowing around her. She didn't have much place to go so she sat back and let out a screech that was rather loud for her body size.

Shadow heard and leapt into action. He dashed for her and lifted her in his mouth with his teeth retracted, of course. She wiggled out of his gummy grip and purred while rubbing against the back of his head. He gave a groaning sigh after she did so then she flew away.

"Nice job, bud." I pet his head quickly after he came back to me.

Lightning had struck near Toothless and freaked him out. He let out a frightened roar and ran from the lightning. "Wait, wait. Toothless, stop!" I called out but went unheard as he kept running away.

"I gotta find Toothless." Hiccup said.

Tuffnut and Ruffnut sat on a slope and he said "Yeah, now that's what I'm talking about."

"I've always liked Thor." Ruffnut watched the fire intently.

"Ah, I love these storms!" Snotlout said. He landed behind us on Hookfang with Fishlegs and Meatlug right next to him. "When it rains, I cancel bath night and stand outside with nothing but a sponge and a bar of soap!"

"We know, the village has had meetings about it." Fishlegs said.

"And given me nightmares." I shuddered then lightning struck behind Fishlegs and I. He winced and I only blinked in response then looked around, "Did you guys see where Shadow went?"

"I think he flew back towards the great hall." Fishlegs said.

"Thanks, Fishlegs." I said then took off towards the great hall. I saw him looking intently up towards the lightning striking through the sky. It reflected off of his eyes and he finally let out a huff when he noticed me and shifted his gaze down to me. "Shades, what are you doing, bud?"

He leapt down and stood at my side. He looked around the sky for a moment then looked towards Stoic, Bucket and Mulch as they stood and talked at the top of the stone steps to the great hall.

"It's striking throughout the entire village! It's like we're under seige!" Mulch exclaimed.

"I've never seen Thor this angry!" Bucket said.

"Why would Thor be angry at us?" I scratched my head. Shadow blinked at me then looked away from me so he could growl at Mildew. Stormfly

landed near the steps with Hiccup and Astrid on her back.

"Toothless!" Hiccup called. Lightning struck behind Toothless and he leapt from the perch he stood on.

"Did you all see that?" Mildew asked. Vikings came over to see what it was he was speaking of. Lightning struck near Toothless again and he leapt from perch to perch to get away.

"Look; the lightning is followin' him." Mulch said.

Toothless leapt over to Hiccup and he jumped off of Stormfly's back to join him. "Toothless." Hiccup gasped and laid his arms over his head then quickly checked him over but didn't find any injuries.

"Oh, don't you all understand? Thor is mad at all of us and I'll tell you why; because of him!" He pointed his staff towards Hiccup and Toothless. "As you all know; the Night Fury is the unholy offspring of lightning and death itself! We let him live among us and now we will all pay the price."

"Well it did seem that the lightning struck right at the dragon." Mulch said.

"Yes! Right at the dragon. Now, there is but one thing for us to do... banish the Night Furies!" He exclaimed and Vikings began to murmur their agreement. "It's the only way."

"What? No, this is ridiculous!" Hiccup said but went unheard.

"If we don't act now, well, need I remind you of Barnstat?" The other Vikings 'ooh'ed and looked towards each other for further agreement and banishing the two.

"You're right, all of you." Stoic said. "Thor is angry but I don't believe he's angry at Toothless. And if he was infuriated with the Night Furies, why hasn't Shadow been struck once during this entire happening?"

"So, it's just Toothless, eh? Well, can you tell me this; what makes Shadow so special?"

"Huh?" I asked.

Mildew looked towards me and pointed his staff at me. "Well, if your Night Fury is as special enough to where Thor hasn't attacked him than why would that be? Is he just too precious? Is he made of gold?"

"I never said any of that." I said. "You're all accusing Toothless and Shadow of crimes they didn't commit."

"She's right. Have you all forgotten what these two have done for this village?" Hiccup asked.

"Well, who do you suppose he's angry at?"

"I don't think any of us can read Thor's mind but I surely bet that

we can find a way to calm him." I said. "That's a promise."

\* \* \*

><p>"Another storm is coming." Hiccup said.</p>

"Thor tore a hole in the great hall." Tuffnut said. "Maybe he's hungry, I know I am."

"Me too." I patted my stomach a bit and Shadow groaned in agreement. "Well, that makes three of us."

"We need to make Thor happy." Hiccup stuck to his subject. "But what do you give the god of thunder and lightning?"

"Blood?" I asked.

"Al, just... what?" Hiccup gave a look of disbelief towards me.

"Actually, I know that Thor's enjoyed a sacrifice or two in the past." Fishlegs said.

"Let's sacrifice Tuffnut." Ruffnut pointed a thumb towards Tuffnut. Tuffnut looked away and seemed to be in deep thought which wasn't abnormal since he usually had to think hard about things but gave his answer quicker than I expected.

"Okay. What time should I be there?" Tuffnut shrugged then folded his arms. "There better be fire involved."

"Ooh, we can stuff you in a barrel and have Shadow set it on fire as we slowly rotate it while-"

"Al!" Hiccup scolded.

I laughed with a shrug, "Oh, come on. I was just kidding."

"Oh, man. You mean you weren't serious?" Tuffnut complained. "I wanted to hear more."

"I wanted to see it." Ruffnut said.

"Seriously, though, I was kidding." I said.

"Anyway, guys, no one's going to be sacrificed." Hiccup said.

"Not yet anyway." Snotlout shrugged.

"I had an aunt who was cursed by Odin once." Astrid said. "She had to pay tribute to him by sailing to the end of the earth."

"Did it work?" I asked.

"I don't know. I guess she couldn't find it 'cause she kept showing up from the opposite direction."

"Hiccup, as I've told you before, Slade mentioned that Thor was mad at my mother and I and would punish us. I doubt that, though." I shrugged.

"The gods have never been mad at anyone from our family." Fishlegs said. "Knock on wood," He knocked on the wooden steps to a house. "Hop on one foot." He did so. "Slap a Jorgenson."

Ooh, I got to see this.

I should've known better, though. Fishlegs held a hand out as he was ready to slap Snotlout but instead just poked him in the chest and giggled. Snotlout pushed him to the ground.

"Snotlout, what have I told you about that dang attitude of yours? How many times do you have to hear 'I'm going to slap you' before you take it seriously?"

"When you actually do it without being held back by Hiccup." He responded.

I nonchalantly reached over and slapped him. "There you go."

"Why you—" He turned and glared at me.

"You wanna go?"

"Heck, yeah. I wanna go!"

"Al!" Hiccup scolded and I drew myself into my shoulders then looked over at him. "Get away from that. You don't know where it's been."

"Okay." I muttered and walked to Hiccup's side.

"Well, guys, I don't know about you but if I were Thor, I would want a giant statue." Snotlout said, stood on Hookfang's head and had himself lifted into the air. "Of myself. Snotlout as Thor." He flexed his arms.

"You do know that we're trying to make him happy?" Astrid asked and I turned away to laugh then glanced back over.

"Exactly!" Snotlout kissed his flexed arms.

Astrid turned away and I heard a gurgling sound in her throat. She turned away and narrowed her eyes, "I think I just threw up in my mouth."

"Actually, that's not a bad idea." Hiccup said.

"It's not an idea, it's a reflex." Astrid retorted and I began to laugh. She silenced me by punching me in the arm. I remembered that this was conversation and gave her a gentle shove to the side. She shook her head at me.

"N-No. What? No. I mean the statue." Hiccup said then Astrid's throat gurgled again.

"There I go again." She said; weaker this time around. She was so close to losing it.

"No, not Snotlout." Hiccup explained then made his cousin glare down

at him. "Of Thor."

"Hmm, Berk has never given Thor a statue." Fishlegs said thoughtfully.

"Well than it's high time we did." Hiccup concluded.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup had the others working on parts of Thor's statue as I was only a supervisor just as he was. I heard a clang and looked towards the twins as they beat each other on the head with their mallets.

"Hey!" I whistled to get their attention. They looked over toward me while holding their hammer in a swinging position. "Back to work." They reluctantly did after a second or two.</p>

Everything else so far had been going dandy, excluding Snotlout welding Thor's knee backwards that is.

"What are you doing?" Hiccup asked Fishlegs.

"I'm making Thor's pants. I hope they're not too tight. I hate it when my pants are too tight, I feel so bloated." Fishlegs said then went back to working. Hiccup turned his back and gave a sigh.

"Something wrong?" I tilted my head yet didn't take my eyes off of anyone.

"Just worried." He folded his arms and leaned on my right shoulder. I looked down briefly at him then back up. "I know that Thor's going to like this gift but I'm just concerned that the other Vikings might ignore what you and dad said last night and still try to get rid of Toothless and Shadow. All because of Mildew..."

"Yeah, I know." I placed an arm over his shoulder and shook him a bit affectionately. It was like that for a moment then we heard thunder crack again. I looked towards the flashing sky and Hiccup shook me off.

"Okay, guys. We better start welding these pieces together." He said.

\* \* \*

><p>"Attention. Attention, everyone." Hiccup called out to the Vikings gathered around the statue that was covered in a large mash of rags that were sewn together. "Okay. So, I know that we're not exactly Thor's favorite people right now but I am confident that this beautiful statue will go a long way toward getting us back in his good graces.</p>

Scattered murmurs of agreement were heard.

"So, without further ado." He pulled the mash of rags off and revealed the statue that the others had created of Thor.

Thor stood proudly with his hammer in his right hand high over his head and his left was up in a 'stop' or a 'halt' gesture. It was rather beautiful, even the Viking teens that helped build it were in

awe with their hard work.

"Well done." Stoic said. "Thor will appreciate this tribute and smile upon us once again." There was plenty of cheering going all around except for Mildew, of course.

"You really think this is enough to appease the might Thor?" He asked.

"Mildew, drop it." I snarled.

"No, you're fools! All of ya!"

"You've been having this coming for years, old man." I said but Stoic pulled me back by the arm and forced me to stand up straight. "Let me at 'im!"

"Al, calm down." Hiccup made the gestures of what he just said with his hands and I glared at the back of Mildew's head while he walked away. "Let's just go inside, okay?" He pushed me towards the door.

"Sure." I mumbled.

\* \* \*

><p>The thunder and lightning was even worse than before. Hiccup was the first to speak up about it, "Unbelievable, even more lightning than the last storm."</p>

"I don't understand." I shrugged.

"I'm with you, lass. We gave Thor a giant statue." Gobber said then shut the door.

"It was a gallant effort, son but it looks as though this is not what Thor wanted." Stoic claimed. Lightning boomed in the sky outside and Gobber took a step away from Shadow and Toothless as they both sat next to each other.

"Gobber, what are you doing?" Hiccup asked a little deadpanned.

"Eh, I love Toothless and Shadow but just airing on the side of caution." Gobber said and I slapped a hand to my forehead.

"The brave blacksmith that had his hand devoured by a Monsterous Nightmare before his very eyes, the one that saw a Nadder's spine slice through a man's eye like a grape, the same man that had tamed a Boneknapper dragon is afraid of being struck by lightning?" I asked with a cocked brow and emphasized at the end.

"Is that really important right now, Aly?" He pointed his right hand at me.

"Kind of, yeah." I said.

Toothless moved towards Hiccup and groaned quietly for a bit. Hiccup pet across his head, "Don't worry, bud. I'm not going to let anything happen to you, \_no matter what SOME people think!\_" He directed to Gobber.

We maybe got only a moment of silence until Hiccup broke it, "You really don't think Thor is angry because of Toothless and Shadow, do you?" He looked towards Stoic for reassurance.

"Of course I don't." He replied.

"Open up, Stoic! We've come for the dragons!" Mildew shouted from outside.

"But I'm afraid they do." Stoic said. "Get those two to a safe place, I'll try to reason with them."

"But—" Hiccup began to object but didn't finish.

"Just go." Stoic put a hand on his shoulder.

"Safe travles, old friends." Gobber pet Toothless with his right hand. Hiccup came to Toothless then ran upstairs and out of the window.

"Hey, what about me?" I asked and ran upstairs but then looked back downstairs at my sword resting against the wall. I ran back down and hefted it over my back then went back upstairs and out of the window with Shadow right behind me. We landed behind the house then peeked out just behind the house to see Mildew with plenty of Berkains behind him. They all shouted for the exile of the Night Furies.

"All right, guys. Don't worry, it's just us." Hiccup consoled. Toothless gave a sad sort of grumble while Shadow had stared off at the angry villagers then turned away.

"Got it. We should get going." I said then pushed Hiccup along. We ran away from the area.

"We need to find Astrid." Hiccup said as we ran.

"Sure." I agreed without asking. "Let's go."

"Go hide them in the cove for now." Astrid suggested after we had found her.

"They'll just find them." Hiccup said. "We have to leave."

"'We?'" Astrid asked.

"Toothless can't make it on his own and I wouldn't want him to. I'm going with him."

"Hiccup, you didn't tell me about this part of the plan." I said.  
"Why didn't you say something earlier?"

"I, uh..." He didn't have an excuse.

"Hiccup, no." I said sternly. "I'm not going to let you do this. Regardless of all of the other dangerous things we've encountered, you aren't coming. I'll fly Toothless since Shadow can fly on his own. I'll go ahead and hide them somewhere."

"Al, you're kidding." Astrid said.

"Do I look like I'm kidding?" I stared into her eyes. She kept her gaze locked with mine then finally blinked and broke our staredown.

"You'll come back right?" Hiccup asked.

"Yeah, once they figure out that this didn't happen because of Toothless and Shadow." I said and got onto Toothless's back then patted his head. "I promise, \_I promise\_; we're going to be fine." Hiccup gave a somewhat skeptical look that begged for me not to go. "You have to believe in me."

He gulped audibly and bit his lip. He looked at the ground for a moment then looked back up at me, "Be careful."

"I'll do my best." I said then shifted my sword along my back a bit. "Toothless, Shadow." I looked at them both. "Let's go."

I kept them both high in the dark clouds to hide them from sight. The rumbling thunder and lightning grew a bit as we soared through the sky. I felt as if I should check on the shouting that searched through the forest and landed Toothless ontop of a tall-standing tree that held his weight nicely.

Torches were lit and Vikings shouted all over to find the Night Furies. I bit my lip when Toothless and Shadow looked toward me. I smiled at them, "Don't worry, guys. It'll be fine." I said then Toothless began to take flight again with Shadow coming in just behind.

I could take them to Dragon Island but that's a bit too far from Berk. The cove was already out of the question and so was anywhere in the village. I wondered if I could have just hid them on one of the higher points of the island then there was the northern cave and the western beach.

I rubbed the back of my head in slight frustration then I jumped a bit when lightning struck behind us and startled Toothless. He growled and swerved, lightning struck to our left and made Toothless swerve quite a bit.

The lightning grew furious and bolted around us wildly until I heard a sizzling sound and Toothless and I began to fall from the sky.

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless had hit several trees on the way to the ground since he couldn't fly and after the first blow, Alyssa was sent tumbling off his back but Shadow was able to swoop in and catch her before any more damage was done.</p>

He placed her gently on the ground and stared at her with deep concern in his eyes. He lowered his nose to her face and sniffed a bit, he nudged her with his nose and groaned in distress. He nudged a bit rougher than more gently.

After recieving no response each time, he gave a sad groan the let a deep and heartbreaking roar into the night. He walked in a circle around her once or twice then laid by her side. He forced on of her

arms up so it would lay over his neck and he licked her face gently before lying there pitifully with void eyes.

Toothless came and sniffed her as well, Shadow looked at him but didn't move his head from its spot on the ground. He watched so emotionlessly and paid little to no attention to everything else going on around him.

Meanwhile, Hiccup's eyes widened after seeing a black figure come plummeting down to the earth. He gulped audibly then gasped "Al. Astrid, I'm borrowing Stormfly!" He said aloud and got on Stormfly's back.

"Why? What happened?" She asked; oblivious to what had just happened.

"No time to explain. I got to go." He said then Stormfly flew towards where the black figure came plummeting down. He felt as if it was taking too long. As if each second took half an hour.

A deep and heartbroken roar rang out through the sky. Hiccup's eyes widened further as he whispered to himself, "No. This can't be real." He hadn't seen anything yet but he had a pretty good idea of what had happened.

Soon, but not soon enough, Hiccup had landed Stormfly near two black dragons that laid on the ground. One that was void of any life whatsoever and the other that looked rather focused yet frightened at the same time. He jumped off and patted Stormfly's leg, "Go home, okay?"

Stormfly gave out a squawk then flew back to the village.

He ran over to Toothless and pet his head in a rush, "Hey, bud. You're okay, huh?" He asked. Toothless groaned then looked down the muss of golden hair that was sprawled across the ground. "No." Hiccup gasped and got on his knees. He gently wiped the hair from her face, "Alyssa? Hey, Al, can you hear me?"

He took a deep breath and laid an ear against her chest. It felt like it took forever for him to get a response. He held his breath and waited for it. His mood changed completely when heard a thumping noise inside of her chest and he let out a happy gasp.

Shadow looked towards him with empty eyes. They didn't even have their special shine or glow that they usually had, they were empty and dark. He stared at Hiccup but then his gaze changed and looked like he wasn't even aware of anyone else anymore.

That look had actually scared Hiccup but he was going to do what he could to help and lifted Alyssa the best he could and when he did, her arm was removed from Shadow's neck. His eyes became the narrowest that anyone had ever seen and he snapped his jaws harshly with a very audible grinding noise.

"Shadow, I'm trying to help and help her." Hiccup said with a desperate look in his eyes. Shadow stared at him with those same narrowed eyes that wanted nothing more than to hurt him for removing Alyssa's arm from his neck. "Please, you have to trust me."

The two had their gaze locked for what could have seemed like forever. Shadow's irises slowly grew and he blinked away whatever anger he could and became a void once again. His eyes did have a bit of a spark in them this time, a spark of hope.

Hiccup lifted Alyssa once again and laid her to where he could have a better look at her. There wasn't much that he could see. Other than a couple of scratches made by the tree that had they'd hit coming down.

He looked up briefly and saw that back in the village that was still in eyesight. Lightning struck each metal perch and the metal statue of Thor. He gasped and looked at Toothless's tail, burnt to a bright orange color. He swallowed as he remembered that Alyssa had brought her sword with her. He looked down towards the sword that had flown off her back and was now a bit wavy and orange from the heat of the lightning.

"It's hitting the metal." Hiccup said to himself. "I wonder..."

He didn't get to finish. Toothless and Shadow were both thrown aside by a bola. Toothless went down without much of a fight but Shadow gave a desperate look towards Alyssa's body and roared. His eyes were sad and angry at the same time. He snapped his jaws at everything that tried to touch him which were quite a few Vikings.

They put a leather muzzle over him and he growled deeply. He could only struggle in hopes of getting out now. Metal rings around him and Toothless as they were pulled up onto individual carts.

"Toothless!" Hiccup called out. He was picked up by the arm by one of the Vikings. "No, leave them alone!"

"Don't try and stop us. You'll only make it worse for your precious dragons." Mildew said then looked behind Hiccup. "Ah, I see Hudson is no longer with us." He grew a disgusting smirk on his face.

"Midlew, she's not dead. I got her heartbeat." He said the watched as the restraints on the two Night Furies got tighter and they struggled ferociously against them. "Toothless! Shadow!" He tried to run for them but it was of no use. Other Vikings had held him back but he squeezed between them and held onto Toothless's cart. "Toothless!" He held on and tried to keep up but eventually tripped and fell to the ground. He lifted himself slightly, "Oh, no."

"What do we do with her?" One Viking asked Mildew.

"I personally couldn't care less. Toss her over a cliff for all I care."

"Take her back to the village." Hiccup said sternly.

"Why would we do that?"

"I'm the chief's heir." He said. "Your future chief. Take her back to the village and get her fixed up." He looked at the Vikings that stared at each other for a minute then went to help his unconscious friend. Hiccup gave a curt nod to himself and left.

He walked to the blacksmith and laid the now wavy sword down on the

counter. He looked at it briefly then began to search for anything that he could use for what he was about to do next. He found a large metal rod and decided that was as good as it was going to get.

"Hiccup, they've got Shadow and Toothless. They're about to fly them out to sea." Astrid said as her and the other Viking teens had approached. "Where's Alyssa?"

"Struck by lightning." He said. "She had a heartbeat when I checked on her but I don't know if she'll be fine or not. As for the dragons, why do you think I have this?" He held the spear out in his hands.

"Ooh, tough one. How many chances do we get?" Tuffnut asked.  
"Five?"

"Oh, god." He muttered quietly, "Astrid, fly me to the docks." He said and walked off with her.

"Stop!" Hiccup shouted to the Vikings at the dock that jeered against the chief, Gobber, Bucket and Mulch for protecting the two dragons they planned on sending off. "You can get rid of the dragons, you can throw them off the edge of the world but it's not going to stop this lightning from destroying Berk." He explained.

The Vikings talked amongst themselves and shook their heads at his statement.

"It's the metal." Hiccup rose the metal spear in his hand. "The lightning is hitting the metal."

Anger rose in the Vikings at his outrageous statement once again.

"Just think about it; we never had a lightning storm like this until we put up those perches. That statue, right? And they're all made of metal\_!" He explained.

"Oh, bah!" Mildew smacked at the rod with his staff. "Have you ever heard anything so insane?"

Agreements rang through the Vikings as they continued to stare down Hiccup. He ran to Toothless's tail and lifted it after setting down the metal rod he was carrying. "You see? This is where the lightning, I believe had struck Toothless. On this connecting rod, this metal connecting rod."

They still didn't believe him.

"Alyssa Hudson, struck by lightning because it was drawn to her sword." He explained and his voice cracked a bit. No one believed him still, "If you still don't believe me, I can prove it." He lifted the metal rod again. He climbed back up on Stormfly and flew up the mast of a ship. He leapt onto the mast of the ship.

"Are you sure you know what you're doing?" Astrid asked.

"'Sure'? That's, uh, a strong word. Actually more of a hunch." He explained and Astrid's eyes had widened. "But I'll be fine. Go." He

said. Stormfly flew down and away from the mast.

"Oh, boy. Here he goes again." Gobber said.

"He doesn't make it easy." Stoic agreed. "Hiccup!"

Right about now, Alyssa would be screaming at him to knock it off. She'd go up there and take command over his reckless behaviour. She'd have taken the metal rod for herself and gotten Hiccup to where it was less dangerous but she couldn't. She was unconscious and this was about to be done.

"You'll all see for yourselves." Hiccup said. "When I attach this metal rod to the top of this mast, the lightning will be drawn to—" He hadn't gotten to finish. Lightning struck him and surged through his body.

"Hiccup!" Stoic called.

Hiccup had lost consciousness and fell off the mast, into the water. Toothless witnessed this and struggled against the metal bars so hard that they ended up breaking into pieces and the leather strap around his jaw snapped. He leapt into the water to save Hiccup.

Shadow watched Toothless break free and it gave him hope. He struggled harder than he ever remembered and snapped out of them. The muzzle was still on him but he snapped it after only a second or two of more fierce struggling. He watched over the edge of the dock and saw Toothless come up with Hiccup.

"Hiccup." Stoic gasped.

He laid unmoving on the dock. Toothless nudged him continuously yet very gently. Shadow turned away and let himself droop. He lost yet another precious person in his life... or so he thought.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup slowly woke from his knock out and rose a hand up to his aching head. He let out a few small grunts then grinned when he saw Toothless by his side and pet him. "Toothless. What happened, bud?" He asked then quickly uncovered his legs and looked down at them. He moved his real foot about to make sure he wasn't seeing things. "At least I didn't lose another one." Toothless rubbed against Hiccup's face with a low trill.</p>

Shadow was quite happy to see that Hiccup had awoken but was still very void of life. He had only glanced in Hiccup's direction, gave a brief yet fake smile then went back to being empty.

"My boy." Stoic said and lifted Hiccup off his feet. "You took a lightning bolt to the head." He placed him back down and gently rubbed a hand over Hiccup's hair.

"Just like Barnstat." Gobber said. "Except we won't be throwing you off the island."

"So everyone knows Thor wasn't mad at these two?" He gestured to the Night Furies in his room.

"They do now."

"Until we figure out why Thor was angry at the metal, we're all walking on eggshells." Gobber said.

Hiccup gave a look of understanding then his eyes widened, "Al! Where- where is she? Is-is she alright? I've got to see her." He said and as he was about to run off, Stoic pulled him back.

"Now, son, Alyssa's alive but she's not awake. She's been out ever since the lightning struck as far as we know. We don't know just how okay she is. She's just downstairs if you want to see her." Stoic said.

That was all he needed to hear, he ran downstairs and looked at his friend lying on the couch as if she was asleep. He looked at her carefully and made sure she wasn't hurt, which thankfully, she wasn't.

He gulped and held onto her hand, "Al? It's... it's Hiccup. Listen, I know that you say that you'll always be there for me and I need you now. So..." He cleared his throat and his grip got slightly tighter for a bit then loosened, "I-If you can hear me, squeeze my hand. Please."

He waited... and waited... and waited.

"I-I don't know if you heard me the first time but squeeze my hand please." He said a bit above a whisper this time.

He still got no response.

He shifted his weight uncomfortably and looked at her hopefully. He watched and waited for the squeeze that didn't come. He found it hard to swallow for a bit then stood back up, "Get well soon." He patted her hand and began to walk back upstairs but he heard a few clanging noises outside.

He walked outside and saw that Vikings were pulling it downwards to lie it down and tear it apart. "Oh, we worked so hard on that statue." Hiccup sighed. "Kind of a shame to just scrap it for parts."

A hand was placed over his shoulder and his father leaned in to speak to him, "Well, maybe we don't have to. Why don't you take it to one of the high points on the island and leave it there?"

"Good idea, chief." Tuffnut spoke up. "Huh, would've thought of it myself but I'm not the chief."

"Oh, we'll handle that for you." Snotlout said then the two walked away.

So they dropped the statue off in front of Mildew's house and left him there to shout angrily at them for what they had just done.

"Uh, I'm not sure that's what my dad had in mind, guys." Hiccup said.

"Hey, that's the way I understood it." Snotlout retorted.

For a brief moment, a smile crept onto Hiccup's face. Alyssa would have done the same. The smile faded and he looked aside. "Al." He sighed softly.

Shadow still laid voidly on the bed, he stared off into space and paid no mind to anything. One paw was folded over the other, head resting down on his paws. Regardless of how helpless he looked, he was anything but.

Each time that someone had reached over to touch him, his jaws snapped in their direction. Each time he heard a noise, his eyes narrowed and he would growl deeply. He was empty and wanted nothing other than to be alone. He was grieving and hardly moved. He hardly ate. He was just... there.

"Shadow, are you alright, bud?" Hiccup asked after coming upstairs. Shadow gave a sharp growl toward him but eased up and blew out a large huff of smoke in disagreement. "Didn't think so." Hiccup sighed.

The look on Shadow's face screamed 'Then why the \*\*\*\* did you ask?'

"Listen, I'm sorry about Al. I am but Shadow, you've got to eat or get up and move around. Do something. Do you think Al would want this?" He gestured to Shadow as he laid on the floor in the corner of the room.

Shadow looked up and down his own body then gave him a look with narrowed eyes that said 'You just gestured to all of me.'

"Exactly." Hiccup understood. "She wouldn't want you to starve. She'd still want you to be you. She'll wake up soon, I promise." He would have pet him but wasn't exactly in the mood to have his hand bit.

"Who are you guys talking about?" The two stiffened at the voice.

\* \* \*

><p>"Al!" Hiccup shouted and would have tackled me if Shadow hadn't done so first. I was sent back into the wall and Shadow licked my face until it was absolutely soaked by his dragon saliva. My eyes widened I let out a pained groan.</p>

"Holy sweet mother of Freya!" I held onto my arm. "Odin's ghost, for the love of all that is good!"

"Al, what's wrong?" Hiccup asked and knelt to my side the best he could but had trouble doing so because of his leg.

"My arm hurts." I groaned and clutched onto it.

"You did take quite the fall." Hiccup tilted his head to the side slightly. "How do you feel? Other than your arm."

"I feel kind of okay." I said. "My head is aching terribly, my body is in quite a bit of pain and all. Other than all of that, I feel fine. Thank you for asking." I finally lifted my arm that didn't hurt

and wiped whatever saliva I could off my dripping face. "I missed you, bud." I kissed Shadow's nose. He pushed farther towards me and purred deeply.

"He really missed you." Hiccup sat down with his legs crossed.

"Oh?" I asked and laughed when Shadow's nose nudged my face.

"Yeah, he wasn't eating. He wasn't doing much of anything. He was just... kind of... there." Hiccup said hesitantly.

"Shades, why were you doing that?" I pet his head that he was now hanging a bit guiltily. "You gotta eat, bud."

Shadow looked away from me.

"Don't do that again." I scolded. He drew his head back then tried to butter me up by nuzzling against my stomach and it was working. "Oh, I can't stay mad at you." I hugged his head.

Hiccup looked like something was on his mind but ultimately decided that he would reserve that into the back of his mind. I noticed him do so and sat up straight, he jumped when he saw me look at him.

"What is it, Al?"

"I heard you." I said bluntly.

"Huh?" He rose his now furrowed brows.

"'If you can hear me, squeeze my hand.'" I quoted and gave a small shrug. "I don't know why I couldn't, though. I tried. Sorry about that."

"That doesn't matter, at least you're okay now." He hugged me as tight as his thin arms could.

"Yep." I hugged him with my one good arm tightly but not tight enough to squeeze the life out of him.

"I'm glad to have my guardian angel back." He said.

The words he spoke pierced through me and my eyes had widened in shock. My breathing had gotten slightly heavier and I forced myself to wrap my other arm around him as well and gave him a firm squeeze.

"Glad to be back."

### 23. What Flies Beneath Pt 1

\*\*BloodBendingDancer: I would, too, if I had a best friend. And yes, good boy, Shades!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Hey, Al, how's that arm?" Hiccup sat next to me and looked at my aching arm.</p>

"Doing better. It still hurts, though but not bad at all." I rubbed

it gently and looked towards him.

He gave me an uncomfortable and sympathetic look as he stared down at my arm.

"Hiccup, it's not like that I can't do anything with this arm. I can move it, lift heavy weights and whatnot perfectly fine." I moved my arm around. "I guess that it doesn't so much as hurt but it's got to be at least sore."

"If you say so." Hiccup said skeptically then his mood changed so he could tell me something absolutely different. "Hey, Al, was something going on last night? Toothless was up growling and walking around my room. Did anything weird happen?"

"No." I shook my head. "Well, not that I know of anyway."

"Oh." He looked away then back at me. "Al, I've got something for ya. Close your eyes."

"All right." I shut my eyes and waited for him to tell me that I could open them again.

"Open your hand." He said.

"What are you trying to do?" I asked skeptically.

"Al, just open your hand." I opened the hand on my good arm and he placed cool metal into it, I tilted my head curiously but didn't open my eyes. "Okay, you can open your eyes." My eyelids fluttered open and I stared down at the sword in my hand. It was very clean-looking, almost new.

"It kind of got messed up after the lightning strike." Hiccup said and rubbed his arm. "It got a bit wavy so I took it back to the blacksmith and I got it fixed up for you. So, you like it?"

"I adore it." I put my good arm around him for a hug. "Thanks, bud."

"Anytime." He patted my back and we pulled away. "Oh, hey, what's going on outside?" He asked and looked out of the door that Stoic had left open after going out.

"I don't know but of course, we're going to check it out so let's go." I said and got up. "Come on."

There was a large hole in the middle of all the Vikings that surrounded, which wasn't very many by the way. Toothless stuck his head in and sniffed, he let out a roar and reared up. "Whoa, whoa, take it easy, bud. It's just a hole." Hiccup tried to calm him.

Shadow gave a completely different response to the hole; he backed up and laid his ears down against his head. He made a whining noise and looked at the hole rather frightfully. This was unlike him, he'd usually be the first one to check it out and charge in fiercely.

"Hey, hey. What's wrong, bud?" I knelt and pet his head. He didn't

give any other response other than shaking himself and trying to seem brave when the look in his eyes said that he was truly afraid. Whatever's in this hole... it isn't good.

"It's not just a hole! It's like an underground village!" Bucket's voice echoed from the hole.

Shadow growled to try and be brave but it faded into another whine. He stepped back again, "Shadow, bud. What is it?" He began to clench up and I had never seen him look so afraid. He kept trying to put a brave front; growling, standing in an attack position, he was just afraid. "You guys, we have to get Bucket out of there now."

"No, I think I've finally found it; my happy place!" Bucket said then a bunch of dirt and dust flew through the hole and tossed him out of the hole. He fell in front of us and sat up.

"Are you alright, Bucket?" Stoic asked.

"I'm not so happy anymore."

"What happened?"

"Something pushed me out, something's down there. Something big." He said frightfully.

Toothless looked into the hole and had his teeth bared, Shadow ran to him and tried to pull him away by his wing but Toothless slapped him away and growled. He leapt into the hole and disappeared.

"Toothless, where are you going?" I asked. Shadow spread his wings and growled into the hole but soon we heard a humming noise and he clenched up again and backed away from the hole with a whine.

"Toothless!"

"What's that noise?" Astrid asked.

"Whatever it is, it's giving me the willies." Gobber responded.

I saw dust and dirt begin to fly towards the hole's opening again and before I could back away, Shadow pulled me. He grabbed my tunic from behind and began to pull me away from it. He put a wing over me but regardless, he was shaking.

I poked my head out from behind his wing; a spiked dragon, an eel or snake-like body with a large head and white eyes. It screeched ferociously.

"Look at the size of that thing." Snotlout said.

"Do I have to?" Fishlegs asked while keeping his head turned away from the growling dragon that hovered in front of them all.

"Guys, back off! That's a Whispering Death!" I called and forced myself out from Shadow's wing. He gave an uncomfortable whine.

"Dragons, everyone!" Astrid ordered.

The Whispering Death looked at all of us, he looked at Hookfang, Meatlug, Stormfly. He wasn't looking at the riders, he was looking at the dragons. But why would Shadow be so afraid? He finally looked towards Shadow and dove down for him.

Shadow's eyes grew wide and he flew away, faster than a lightning bolt, this made the Whispering Death hit his face against the ground but that didn't hurt it. He just growled in frustration that Shadow had flown off and he knew that Shadow was too fast for him so he flew back into his hole.

"Al, you said that was a Whispering Death?" Astrid asked.

"Yes, I did." I answered.

"Cool name. So much better than Zippleback." Tuffnut said.

"What do you think was up with Shadow?" Hiccup asked.

"Best guess?"

He nodded.

"Well, I don't really have a guess but Shadow was afraid. He began to whine when he first saw the hole. He tried to be brave but I guess that it just didn't work out."

"Oh, so your dragon's a chicken!" Snotlout mocked.

"Shut up, Snotlout! Now isn't the time!"

The Whispering Death came back out from the ground and began to look for something, Shadow, I presume.

"Seems angry. Why don't you do that thing where you touch its nose and feed it grass?" Gobber asked.

"Okay, Fishlegs, what do we know about the Whispering Death?" Hiccup asked.

"Boulder class, razor-sharp teeth, incredibly strong, hunts from underground."

"Now, I really want one." Tuffnut said.

"Vikings claimed having ongoing nightmares after encountering them." I added on. "But I don't see how what I just said is going to help. And it's not even that scary."

"So, how do we deal with this thing?" Snotlout asked a bit forcefully.

"All right, everyone! Thornado's got something to say to this beast!" Stoic boomed and Thornado fired away at the Whispering Death but it remained unharmed and unaffected by the attack. If anything, he seemed angrier.

"I don't think it's got its listening ears on." Gobber said.

"The dragon has no known weaknesses so far, we have to try something

else." I called.

"All right, let's ride this thing." Astrid said.

Toothless jumped in and growled at the other dragons, he made a head gesture for the others to back away. The dragons hadn't moved from their spot.

"What's Toothless doing?" Snotlout asked.

"I think he wants us to back off." Astrid said.

"No problem here." Fishlegs said, Meatlug back to fly back away from the dragons below.

"Toothless!" Hiccup called.

"Come on, Toothless, back down!" I said.

The Whispering Death dove for Toothless but he leapt out of the way and tackled the larger dragon to the ground by tackling its tail. He fired at it about three times then let out a roar. He attempted to fly but due to his tail, that didn't work out so well. The Whispering Death saw this and flew a bit higher into the air.

"Toothless can't fly without me. He's a sitting duck." Hiccup said.

"Then go get on his back." I replied. "If you don't, I will."

"As soon as that thing is clear of Toothless, fire!" Stoic said to Gobber.

"Dad, wait!" Hiccup said then ran for Toothless. "Just let me on—" But Toothless shoved him away and knocked him over. "Toothless, wha-what's wrong with you?" Toothless's only response was to do a double-take then growl in his direction before he began to head back to the Whispering Death.

"What was that all about?" Astrid asked.

"I have no idea."

The Whispering Death roared once again and flicked its long tail, spines flew out just like it would with a Deadly Nadder and it hit Toothless in his back leg.

"Fire!" Stoic commanded.

A rock flew from a catapult and hit the larger dragon in the jaw, he coiled up and growled in the direction of the catapult. Another rock hit it in the face and he went back underground and left. We only knew because dirt was kicked up in the direction that it went.

"Oh, no. You're hurt." Hiccup said and reached for the spike in Toothless's leg. He growled in response but eased up when he looked back and saw Hiccup his eyes softened and Hiccup pulled the spike out. Toothless ran to a cliff after it was removed. "Toothless, wait!"

"Where's he going?" Astrid asked.

"Probably running away to lick his wounds." Snotlout mocked and laughed.

"It's not funny. Toothless could've been killed. He can't fly, remember?" Hiccup asked.

"And whose fault is that?" Snotlout smirked.

"Seriously, did you just go there?" Astrid asked.

"Hey, I call it like I see it." He said.

"Hey, Snotlout." I said.

"Yeah?"

I elbowed him in the ribs then got in his face. "Keep your mouth shut. I don't want to hear you talk that way again."

"Uh, does anybody want to talk about what in the name of Thor just happened?" Fishlegs asked.

"Uh, dragon fight. Just another day on Berk." Tuffnut said as if it was obvious.

"Uh, not really. It seemed like there was way more to it than that."

"He's right. The Whispering Death singled Shadow and Toothless out." Hiccup said.

"And Toothless wanted that dragon all to himself." Astrid added.

"Not to mention that Shadow was absolutely terrified. So much that he actually left." I said.

"Yeah, they certainly did." Hiccup said.

"The question is; why?"

"Uh, are we going to be tested on this? Because I am completely confused." Tuffnut said.

"Hey, don't look at me." Ruffnut said.

A whine struck my ears and a soft nudge from behind touched my back. I turned and saw Shadow, he looked disappointed and ashamed. He folded his ear plates back and whimpered a bit.

His shoulders seemed to be drooped a bit but not just from the disappointment and shame he was feeling. It was the fear still weighing down on him, it made him so heavy. So... different.

"Hey, bud." I hugged him. "Don't worry, bud. I'm sure Toothless showed that dragon a thing or two about messing around with us. I'm glad that you're safe, though." He pulled away from me and used a paw to make sure that I didn't move past where I was and sat back. He

hung his head low and looked away.

"Shadow, what's wrong?" Hiccup asked. Shadow looked up at him then looked away. He slowly reached a hand out for him. "You're the most vocal of the dragons. Come on, Sh—" He was cut off when Shadow's eyes narrowed into slits and he snapped his jaws at him. Hiccup pulled back.

"Hiccup, I wouldn't take it personally. He's just afraid." I pet Shadow's head. "Sorry about that."

"It's okay, I understand." He said.

\* \* \*

><p>"I really wish you could just tell me what was going on out there today." Hiccup said as he fixed up Toothless's leg.</p>

"Same here." I said as I continued to comfort Shadow by petting him lovingly across his head and neck. The two heard someone coming in and they both tensed, Toothless was ready to fight and Shadow was ready to run.

"How's our wounded warrior?" Stoic asked.

"He's still a little on edge, dad." Hiccup said. "Shadow, too."

"But he didn't fight." Stoic stated. Shadow curled up on the floor and covered his face with his tail fins to cover his shamed face from the rest of us. I pet him down his side.

"Still, he's just terrified, dad. He didn't even eat dinner." Hiccup pointed out. "And Shadow loves to eat."

"Don't worry, you two. I'm sure we showed that dragon a thing or two about uninvited guests on Berk." Stoic said and patted Toothless's nose then patted Shadow's head. Shadow was ready to snap his jaws again when he was touched but pulled back instead. "I don't think he'll be coming back any time soon. At least I hope not." He left after that.

"Yeah, me too." Hiccup said.

"Me three." I rose a hand slightly.

"Okay, that should do it bud, you just need to take it easy." He said and finally got the rest of Toothless's fixed up. Toothless got in bed and did his little fire thing and laid down. "Sweet dreams, Al." Hiccup said and laid in bed.

"Sweet dreams, Hic." I said then kissed Shadow's nose that he wriggled a bit afterwards. "Sweet dreams to you too, bud. Even after today, you're still my number one. I love you, bud." I said and hugged him. "Sweet dreams to you too, Toothless." I finished before leaving the room.

\* \* \*

><p>I woke up on my own accord the next morning and this wasn't unnatural. I usually wake up in the early morning hours but I was

just surprised that I wasn't nudged awake or rolled over by Shadow. I rubbed my eyes and heard Hiccup talk upstairs.<p>

"T-Toothless?" He asked then in a more panicked tone "Shadow?" He came running downstairs and bolted out the door. I shot up and followed him, he called out again "Toothless?!"

"Come on, Shadow. This isn't funny!" I called after him; hoping that he could hear, wherever he was. It took me some time to overcome the realization. "He left."

"And Toothless went after that dragon. Alone." Hiccup said a bit darkly.

#### 24. What Flies Beneath Pt 2

\*\*BloodBendingDancer: I know! D:\*\*

\*\*snake screamer: Nice job. In one of the earlier chapters, she hints that she's had a few squabbles with him in the past. She doesn't see much him as a psychopath but only as a threat to Hiccup and the others. And I LOVE the dialogue that you added on at the end since it sounds like a real conversation that they'd have. I'll add that in. Thank you. : ) \*\*

\*\*Also, I have made a deviantart account with the same username. No art is posted yet but I'll try and get some up soon.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Now we gathered up the rest of the gang so we could go and track down Shadow and Toothless. We just got ourselves packed up in the academy and were ready to head off.<p>

Who was I riding with? Well, Hiccup had Astrid and I don't feel like putting any more weight on Stormfly's back, Meatlug just seems to be too small of a dragon for me, I just don't trust the twins so that kind of left me with...

"Maybe Toothless just went for a morning flight. Oh, that's right; he can't." Snotlout mocked.

I stomped on his foot and he pulled back, "What was that for?!"

"I told you to never speak that way again." I said sharply.

"Toothless must be looking for the Whispering Death, Shadow has got to be hiding from it." Hiccup said. "We find it, we find Toothless and then in the opposite side of wherever they are, Shadow's got to be."

"What do we do if we find the Whispering Death first?" Fishlegs asked.

"Well, we train him." Hiccup said bluntly.

"You know he's got 'death' in his name, right?" Tuffnut asked.

"Is there anything in the Book of Dragons that can help us?" Hiccup asked. Fishlegs opened the book and flipped through it.

"It can shoot razor sharp spines from any part of its body." He said.

"And how's that gonna help?" Astrid asked.

"Well, it would help if we stayed away from those."

"Or we could go near them and use Ruffnut as a human shield." Tuffnut suggested and got himself kicked in the leg by Ruffnut. "Ow, my kneecap! That's new; I like it."

"This dragon must have a weakness." Hiccup said.

"Good luck. As far as I know from that book and what I've seen yesterday; this dragon had no known weaknesses." I said with folded arms.

"She's right. It says right here 'no known weaknesses'." Fishlegs said.

"Heh, I really love this thing." Tuffnut said.

"Great. Uh, can we go please?" Hiccup said and climbed on up Stormfly. "We don't know how much time we have."

I went to climb on Hookfang's back and Snotlout pushed me out of the way. "Hey, uh-uh, you've been a total dillweed since the day we met and I believe that you should repay me." I said calmly and climbed up, sitting in front of him. "I believe that maybe I should ride up front."

"Heh, nice try." Snotlout said and attempted to pull me back. "But I'm sure that Hookfang would rather have me fly him. After all, I'm his rider and you're just some girl."

"Hookfang, would you?" I asked and shrugged Snotlout off. He growled in response. "I take that as a 'no'." I smirked. "Now, let's go get those dragons."

"There! Down below!" Hiccup said and pointed to a Whispering Death hole. The dragons all went down and landed, Hiccup jumped off and cupped his hands around his mouth. "Toothless? Toothless!"

I climbed off of Hookfang and let him know how much I appreciated the ride. "Good job, bud. Thanks for that." He purred as I continued to gently pat his head then gave a rub to his nose.

"How do we even know the Whispering Death made these holes?" Snotlout smirked.

"So you think it might be the other 2,500-pound, rock-eating dragon we're following?" Astrid smirked and I put a hand over my mouth to contain the laughter.

"I know what you're- don't try to confuse me!" Snotlout said.

"Hey, Hiccup, I think the dragon lost a tooth." I held up a fang that

was on the ground next to the hole and handed it to him.

"Is it sharp? 'Cause if it is, I want it. I like sharp." Tuffnut said.

"Yeah, sharp is good." Ruffnut followed.

We blew off what they said and Fishlegs was the first to speak, "Think about this; hundreds of those spinning together, ripping through dirt and tree roots, discarding rock like it's not even there."

"There's an image I'll never get rid of. Thank you, Fishlegs." I said sarcastically. It didn't bother me in the least, I justed wanted to say something.

The dragons began to growl and began to retreat into themselves fearfully. They almost looked as afraid as Shadow when we first discovered the Whispering Death hole.

"Stormfly, what's wrong?" Astrid asked.

"Barf, calm down."

"Stop! Listen." Hiccup silenced all of us, even the dragons quieted down for a moment.

"Listen for what?" Tuffnut asked.

"I don't hear anything." Ruffnut said. "What are we listening for?"

"Be quiet!" Astrid and I said.

"How are we supposed to hear anything over their yelling?" Tuffnut asked.

"Shh!" She said.

There was a low humming in the ground and it shook about. This humming that we were hearing right now was the same humming that we heard back in the village when we first found the Whispering Death's hole.

The shaking grew more and more, it was getting closer. I began to walk around slowly to see where the shaking was more intense, I was no longer paying any mind to what the others were now saying. Ground slowly rose in front of me and I fell back.

Rocks and dirt flew into the air in front of me and towering over me was the Whispering Death. It growled at me and leaned in, I stood up and looked in its milky white eyes. It was glaring at me, that much was clear but he wasn't attacking. My eyes were determined and he finally broke the staredown between us to look at everyone else.

"You won't find your Night Furies here." I said. That was most likely what this dragon was looking for. It turned back and growled at me like it was my fault. "Okay, you can just tone it down."

"Oh, great. She's having a conversation with it." Snotlout said.  
"Well, kiss her good-bye."

"Al, what are you doing?" Hiccup asked.

"That dragon could \_kill \_you!" Astrid said.

"If he did, he would have done it by now, right?" I shrugged but didn't turn to look at her. The dragon coiled up with a growl and dove back underground.

"I hate it when he does that. Can you at least tell me why he does it?" Snotlout asked. That question made everyone turn towards me and Fishlegs.

"Maybe to hunt." He suggested and got no response.

"Maybe because it's cooler." No response.

"Or maybe to look for water." No response.

"Or maybe he can't stand the pressure of everyone always expecting him to have the answers!" He exclaimed.

"Guys, my best guess would be to hunt. When I was walking around, he leapt out of the ground right in front of me so he probably heard me. Then I've noticed that he also goes underground after he gets hurt. Back in the village, he went back underground after that boulder hit him in the head."

"All right, thanks for that." Hiccup said awkwardly.

The Whispering Death shot up out of the ground behind Fishlegs and sent him running. Tuffnut tried to walk towards it, "Hold it still! I want to touch it." Ruffnut pulled him back.

The Whispering Death gave another growl and moved in a snake-like manner through the ground. "Hiccup, just let me take care of this. Okay?" I said and without even getting permission, I stepped up.

"So... you're trying to get yourself killed, right?" I could hear Snotlout's smirk laced into his voice.

I would have said something back but the tone or what I would have said might provoke the Whispering Death further. I slouched and watched as it slithered all the more closer to me. I had just about blanked on ideas until he was only ten feet from me then my hand flew up.

I felt the dirt fly up around me and it was so silent that I thought that I might not have made it but I opened my eyes and saw the dragon only inches from my hand. It tilted its head a bit towards it and had gotten very close. So close that I could feel the heat that radiated off its body.

If we can train this dragon, it'll leave Toothless and Shadow alone. All he has to do is let me pet him. As long as he lets me pet him, that will be that.

I felt rough and rugged scales barely scrape against my palm but then the dragon pulled back quickly and growled once again. He dove back into the ground, Hiccup and I followed him to the hole. "Okay?" I questioned.

"So close." Hiccup sighed and stared down into the hole a little more then gave a nod towards me. I nodded back.

"Okay, I know what you're both thinking and the answer is 'no'." Astrid said.

"We weren't about to ask for permission." I said and jumped down and landed nicely. Hiccup did the same then not too long after, Fishlegs fell in behind us.

"Thanks, Fishlegs. Kinda figured you'd be the last one to volunteer." Hiccup said.

"You were pushed, weren't you?" I asked.

"Noo- yeah."

"Just as I thought."

We all heard the growl and whispers of the rock-eating dragon echo through the walls of the tunnels. This made us all tense up and Fishlegs asked the first question "Quick question, why are we down here again?"

"The dragon spends most of its time down here so more than likely, there'll be something here to help us." I said. "Right, Hiccup."

"You took the words right out of my mouth, actually." He said. "Now, come on, let's go." He walked towards a different tunnel and I was right by his side. The Whispering Death passed by right in front of it but I didn't pay it any mind. "Fishlegs, come on."

He was silent then asked "Oh, you were talking to me?"

"You're the only Fishlegs here." I said. "Now, hurry up."

"Come on, Fishlegs. New dragon; you love this stuff." Hiccup urged.

Fishlegs had a very short internal conflict then said "I hate that about me."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah. Hurry it up. We don't have all day." I got behind him and began to push him so he would walk at a reasonable speed. "The sooner we find out whatever in the name of Thor is going on here, the sooner we find Shadow and Toothless and get this whole conflict under control."

We walked through only a few short tunnels. They smelled thickly of dirt, blood and dead skin. The dirt should surely be obvious, the dead skin I guess would be from the dragon shedding its scales and the blood might be from farm animals since I saw that there was a lot of farm animals missing.

It was eerily quiet other than the whispers and humming of the Whispering Death. It was dark in a few places in the tunnels but it was very well lit thanks to the many holes that jutted up out of the ground. Tree roots decorated the tops of most of the tunnels.

We felt eyes on us and all turned to a hole where two green eyes watched us. They didn't look friendly in the least. Fishlegs gasped a bit, Hiccup backed up but I only blinked in response.

This thing has green eyes, not white like the Whispering Death. The hole it was in wasn't very large so that means that whatever's in there couldn't have been larger than a sheep.

It leapt out at us and bleated. So it was a sheep after all.

It took off running down the tunnel and I shrugged then continued on with Fishlegs and Hiccup but that was only for a few steps because the Whispering Death shot its head out of another tunnel and growled.

We all jumped into the nearest hole and kept ourselves quiet. The large dragon slithered on past without acknowledging us, thought it saw or smelt something, possibly the sheep and slithered further into the tunnels with a slight increase in his speed.

"Guys, did you see—" Fishlegs began but was cut off when the Whispering Death turned around and growled.

I clamped a hand firmly over his mouth and Hiccup followed, putting his hand over mine. We pulled him deeper into the hole and hid in its darker areas. "Be quiet." We whispered in unison, he nodded. We both let go of him after only a couple of seconds.

"Let's just wait until he's gone." Hiccup whispered and the dragon stopped in its tracks. The tail was all that was left to go but the dragon wasn't moving. He was in fact, growling at something and more than likely, it was us.

"How'd that work for us?" Fishlegs asked.

"Quiet down." I said barely below a whisper and looked down the tunnel towards the dragon's head again until a hand hit me in the arm gently. "What is it now?" I asked and turned back to see the two boys pointing at a bitemark on the dragon's tail.

A Night Fury bitemark.

I knew it was a stupid idea but I reached out to touch it but the dragon finally slithered away.

"Did you see that?" Fishlegs asked.

"Was that a bitemark?" Hiccup said.

"It wasn't just any bitemark." I added in, "It was a Night Fury bitemark."

"Mm-hmm. I think we know why Toothless and the Whispering Death are looking for each other \_and\_ why Shadow is so terrified of the Whispering Death." Fishlegs said.

"They have a history." Hiccup said.

"A grudge." I added darkly.

"If that's true, how long do dragons carry a grudge?" Hiccup asked.

I really didn't know but I know that Shadow and Toothless got over whatever the heck went on between them before so I couldn't really answer for two different species of dragons so I shrugged in response to the question.

"To the death." Fishlegs said.

It took both Hiccup and I a couple of seconds to let what he just said sink in. That was a horrible realization for both of us, it stunned us for a second and Hiccup finally broke the silence that ensued.

"Let's get out of here before he comes back." Hiccup said.

"That is a really good idea." Fishlegs said.

"I second that notion." I added.

We ran down the tunnel and in front of us burst the Whispering Death from the darker areas of the tunnel. Fishlegs fell back and Hiccup and I pulled him to the side as the Whispering Death dove towards him then came up on the other side of us.

We ran back to where we first entered the tunnels after that with the long dragon following us. We heard Astrid call us. "Hiccup! Alyssa! Fishlegs!"

"Yep, right here." Hiccup stopped under the opening as did Fishlegs and I.

"Did you see the Whispering Death?" Tuffnut asked. "Was it cool?"

"Did you touch it?" Ruffnut asked.

He elbowed her, "I want to touch it!"

"Can we talk about this later? We\_ really\_ need to get out of this tunnel." Fishlegs said.

"Yeah, you do." She said.

The Whispering Death was coming up and coming up fast. "Fishlegs, you go first." Hiccup said.

"No arguement here." He said then stepped on Hiccup's hands that he held out to lift him.

"I got you, too." I said and did the same. After Fishlegs was up, I kept my hands locked. "Hiccup, go."

"Al but-"

"No buts! That's an order!" I demanded. He looked at me worriedly then shook his head. "Hiccup, go." I ordered more harshly and he shook his head again.

"Al, you are going whether you like it or not."

"No, Hiccup."

"I almost lost you once, I'm not going to lose you again. You think you can do these things but you just can't! Not yet, at least." I stared at him briefly with disbelief but grabbed around his waist and lifted him.

"Sorry, Hic but you're very important to me. You're going first. I promise, I'll be fine." He kicked and protested for a bit but Astrid eventually hoisted him up. "Come on, go." Astrid pulled him up and onto the surface.

"Come on, Al. Take my hand." She said and reached back down for me.

I reached up and our fingertips were able to touch. I jumped and our hands locked together. "Okay." I said and used my feet to dig into the wall and help me climb up. I winced since the arm that I was using to hold Astrid's hand was the same one that I'd hurt from the fall off Toothless's back.

Soon enough, I was half-way on the surface and let go of Astrid's hand so I could put my arms up on the surface of the hole to relax my hurt arm for only a second or two but I felt the earth breaking apart from under my arms and it crumbled away.

I landed on my legs on the bottom of the hole again but they gave out and I fell onto my back. Then as I leapt for her down-reaching hand once again, dirt was flying up only a couple of yards behind me.

"Stand back, everyone! This may not be pretty!" I ordered and I saw them move away from the hole. I didn't have enough time to throw my hand into the air to stop it, I couldn't climb out so I have to accept what this dragon's going to do.

And what it did was throw me out of the hole then try to attack me. I was falling from the sky so there wasn't much I could do. I just fell and accepted it but I felt talons wrap around me and I looked to see Stormfly.

"Hey, girl!" I grinned. "Thanks!" She dropped me off and landed. "Thanks, Astrid." I nodded.

"I don't think it likes you in its hole." Tuffnut said. I restrained laughter because that just sounded wrong.

"Well, no duh." I shrugged.

"Can we get out of here?!" Snotlout shouted then whimpered "Please."

"No. I know that either me or Al can train this thing." Hiccup said.

"Anybody got some dragon nip?" Dragon nip piled up in his hands quickly. He walked towards the Whispering Death. "Don't be afraid, I'm a friend. Here." He held his hands out with the dragon nip piled up in them. "You'll love this. All dragons love this."

The Whispering Death took a sniff and sneezed. The dragon nip flew all over and intoxicated the other dragons. They fell to the ground in pure bliss.

"Oh, great. Now we're defenseless." Snotlout said.

"Ideas?" Hiccup asked.

"Well, I'm sure that my idea is just as good as anyone else's." I said.

"Mm-hmm. And what's that?" Hiccup asked.

"Well, um... run!!" I shouted.

"Good idea." Snotlout agreed.

The Whispering Death's main focus was Hiccup and I. It dove for us quite a few times and it almost got a hold of Hiccup but a black blur jumped in and tackled the larger dragon away.

We all turned to see Toothless latched onto the back of the dragon, clawing and growling and he threw the large dragon to the other side of a clearing. It got back up and growled but began to become intimidated when the other dragons got out of their near-comatose states and stepped up; ready to fight.

Toothless began to charge but the large dragon slithered back into its hole. Hiccup attempted to climb on Toothless's back but he bucked him off and growled at him. "Bud, it's me. I know what's going on with you and that other dragon." Toothless softed a bit. "Let me help you." He reached for Toothless again but he ran away.

Hiccup tried to follow, "Toothless, come back!" Toothless's response was to turn around and fire at the ground near Hiccup's feet. It threw a bunch of dirt in the air and Hiccup jumped back a bit. Toothless ran off again and Hiccup didn't follow this time.

"Awkward." Tuffnut leaned in.

"Go get back on Belch so we can go looking for them again!" I ordered and pushed on his face.

"So Toothless has an archenemy; kind of like you and me." Snotlout said and I looked back to see if he was talking to Hiccup or me.

"Snotlout, you are not my archenemy." Hiccup said.

I turned back ahead and pet Hookfang across the side of his head. "Well, you're mine." Snotlout told Hiccup then I heard. "And so are you. You're probably my main archnemesis."

I didn't even look back at him as I put both hands back up on

Hookfang's horns. I gave a soft chuckle, "Why does that not surprise me?"

"Was that supposed to be a joke?" He asked.

"I don't know. Was it?" I looked back at him sinisterly. "You tell me."

"Uh, forget I said anything." He said.

"That's better." I grinned.

"Anyway, Toothless is just trying to protect you, Hiccup." Astrid said.

"That's not what it is." Snotlout said. "Toothless doesn't want you to ride because it's between him and the other guy. He's a fighter like me, not... whatever you are."

"Hey, calm yourself or I swear that I'll turn this dragon around." I scolded.

"I never thought I'd say this, Snotlout but I think you're right." Hiccup said.

"Huh?" Snotlout and I asked.

"You guys heard that, right?" He asked.

"It's not a fair fight. If Toothless is gonna win, he has to fly and he can't fly without me."

"So what are you saying?" Astrid asked.

"I'm saying we need to find him and soon."

After a few short moments of flying, we saw him running along the ground, "There he is!" Hiccup exclaimed. "We need to get down there."

We landed and let him approach Toothless.

Toothless gave a growl until he saw that it was only Hiccup. He approached him slowly and held a hand over Toothless's head, he stared up at it and rose his head so his rider's hand could touch him. Hiccup eased immediately and hugged his head.

"Hey, bud. You had me so worried there for a while. You haven't been yourself lately. It's good to see you're still you." He said.

The Whispering Death leapt out of the ground and growled. "We can just walk away from this, bud." Hiccup said but Toothless was determined to fight this dragon. So Hiccup attempted to climb on but once again, Toothless had bucked him off and ran towards the Whispering Death.

"So close!" Fishlegs said.

"No." I gasped quietly.

Toothless jumped and fired at the Whispering Death but missed, he couldn't fly and the larger dragon slapped him away with its tail. He tried to fly back up to attack but once again, it failed and he looked down towards his tail and that left him open for a moment; just long enough for the Whispering Death to breathe a ring of fire onto Toothless.

We all tried to get the dragons to charge in and help but after only a couple of steps or barely any movement at all, they stopped after Toothless growled at them.

"Come on, girl." Astrid urged but Stormfly wouldn't move.

"Hookfang won't budge." Snotlout said.

"I think ours' is broken." Tuffnut said.

"They know this isn't their fight, guys." Fishlegs said.

The Whispering Death dove towards Toothless but he leapt away. That didn't help much when the larger dragon blew out rings of fire at him and sent him near a cliff. Toothless roared at the larger dragon and it dove underground.

With it digging so close to the cliff, it actually broke a large gap between Toothless and where the cliff rested now. The Whispering Death came back up and blew some more fire at Toothless. He didn't have much room to move around but was able to jump away.

"Toothless!" Hiccup called.

Another ring of fire was blown but didn't hit. "Buddy." Hiccup said quietly. Toothless looked at him desperately and growled towards him as a plea.

Another ring of fire pushed Toothless closer to the edge. "He's going to knock Toothless into the canyon!" Hiccup exclaimed. Toothless was sliding off the edge and pulling himself back up.

Something had to be done.

He watched with frightened eyes as the scene unfolded in front of him. Toothless was almost falling to his death into a canyon. He had just about a zero-fighting chance and here he was; sitting back and watching. He was too afraid to do anything about it.

He groaned and lowered his head in fear for Toothless. His breathing was heavy and expanded his body quite a bit.

His instincts screamed at him to help but the fear and doubt in the back of his mind forced him to stay where he was. He was stuck and thought over everything that had happened. He thought about each pointless fight, each blissful memory, each scar and groaned sadly.

He didn't know what to do... so he decided to trust his instincts.

A whistle rang through the air and everyone had heard it. We looked around quickly then finally heard the explosion that followed after

hitting the Whispering Death in the back of the head. A blurred black figure passed over it and growled.

We watched as it came back in for another attack and tackled the Whispering Death out of the air and onto the cliff next to us. The force made dirt, dust and rock fly into the air and when it all had cleared, we were able to see what exactly it was.

Shadow had the Whispering Death's back in his jaws. He held on tightly and shook his head wildly with his eyes wide open, in one of the thinnest slits I'd ever seen. Scales were ripped off of the larger dragon and some blood spewed from the bites being left on its back.

"Shadow!" I gasped.

He was momentarily distracted and looked up at me, this momentary distraction got him thrown off into a tree so hard that it knocked it over. He came bolting back out and leapt onto the large dragon once again. He dug his claws into the large head of the dragon and sunk his teeth in.

The Whispering Death smacked at him with its tail but Shadow showed no intention of letting go.

"Okay, Shadow's here." Hiccup said, "But we still have to get Toothless. That thing's ready to give out at any second!"

"Well, what do we do?" I asked.

"You'll see... what I'm going to do." He said and walked off the cliff.

"Hiccup!" Astrid and I called.

We watched as he fell and Toothless leapt for him just before the stone he was standing atop of broke away and crumbled at the bottom of the canyon where they fell.

We all let out sighs of relief when the two emerged from the dust cloud unscathed.

"Thank goodness." I sighed then looked back at Shadow.

The Whispering Death dove for him but he leapt away and bite down harshly on the larger dragon's back once again. It bucked around for a bit then rolled across the ground roughly so Shadow would let go and it worked. It towered over him as he struggled a bit to get up this time and fired down at him; sending him flying back a bit.

He groaned and rolled back onto his stomach, he snarled as the dragon towered over him once again and growled fiercely. Another blast of fire was about to be sent his way but fire hit it in the back of the head instead.

Hiccup flew past on Toothless and the Whispering Death growled. It fired spines at them but missed, a blast of fire also missed as did a plasma blast from Toothless.

Sunlight beamed through the dark clouds and momentarily blinded the

Whispering Death. It dove back underground. Of course! It's eyes are so pale so they must be sensitive to any kind of light, most of its time is spent underground so it wasn't really able to adjust to the bright lighting. Fishlegs hit my arm. "Did you see that?!"

"Sure did. Sunlight's its weakness!" I called to Hiccup.

"All right, let's keep it above ground." He said and had Toothless fire into several of the Whispering Death's holes.

It came back out and flew against a mountain wall. It flew a bit but Toothless tackled it to the ground. "Toothless, no!" Hiccup shouted. The two exchanged fierce roars for a moment then Toothless softened enough to jump off of the dragon and let it go.

It flew away and we came to join them. "Aw, man! Toothless could've finished him off!" Snotlout exclaimed.

"Well, I guess all dragon grudges aren't to the death." Hiccup said.

"I guess I'll have to change that in the book." Fishlegs said.

Shadow flew to my side and he had more than enough blood covering him. He licked his paw a bit then panted up at me. He looked rather happy, whether it be because the Whispering Death is now gone or that he got to see me again. Maybe it was both.

"Hey, bud." I hugged him. "I was so worried. You had me scared out of my wits." He gave a low trill and licked my face gently. "I missed you too, bud. Let's go home." I got on his back.

On the way home, he decided to clean himself off and dove into the water. He came back above water and shook himself dry. I looked at where all of his cuts might have been but there were none at all. I was dumbfounded and sputtered a bit. I pointed around Shadow's body and made incoherent words.

"Where did the- how the- you mean that was from the other guy?!" I asked. He laughed at how flabbergasted I was and kept flying casually. "Whoa." I said.

"So Al, none of that was Shadow's?" Hiccup asked.

"No. I guess it was all the Whispering Death's. I didn't even see that many wounds on him!" I shrugged.

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><p>"All right, right... now." I said. Shadow dropped a large boulder over one of the Whispering Death's holes. "That should be the last of the holes. Let's go back to Hiccup and Toothless."</p>

"Already done." He flew by us and Shadow followed close by. "Al, I know that you'll always have my back." He said.

"Where's this going?" I asked. "What brought this up?"

"I'll always have your back too." He continued as he had just ignored

what I'd asked him. "Same for the dragons. We save them, they save us. That's just how it is. Didn't you say a while back that 'when you love something enough, you do whatever you can to protect them'?" He smiled at me.

"I... I guess I did. That's what brought this up?"

"Yep. We're as close as they come." He said with a bright smile.

"I guess we are." I grinned.

"I know we are." He said.

## 25. Twinsanity Pt 1

"This training is amazing. Wouldn't you say, boy?" I patted Shadow's head. He purred and pushed his head up against me. "I mean, I trust you so I know that you won't screw this up. Besides, it's flying in dark clouds. Dark is perfect for Night Furies."

The twins however, they didn't have as much luck. "How are we supposed to see up here?" Ruffnut asked.

"You aren't." I replied simply. They gave looks of confusion towards me and Hiccup joined my side. "That's the whole point."

"Oh. No, I still don't get it." Tuffnut said.

"When you two can't see, you have to trust Barf and Belch to see for you." Hiccup said then flew into the thicker and darker clouds. "Like this."

"Why does he always have to speak in riddles?" Tuffnut said in frustration.

"He wasn't. He just said-"

"I say we trust us." Ruffnut suggested.

"Yeah, I'm with you, sister." Tuffnut agreed.

"Guys, if you're blind, Barf and Belch can lead you through the clouds, mist or whatever else it may be that you can't see through. You have to trust them." I said.

"Whatever." Tuffnut said. "Belch, up."

At the same time, Ruffnut ordered "Barf, down."

The Zippelback spun in a spiral and began to fall from the air due to the lack of coordination. I saw them fly straight into Fishlegs and all of them were knocked off their dragon and fell into the trees below.

"Well, that can't be good." I said.

The Zippelback tried to split up again since the twins gave the dragon different orders again. "Go for help." From Ruffnut and "Get me down." from Tuffnut.

Fishlegs gave a whistle that caused Meatlug to look at him. He made a couple of hand gestures that made her go down and pick up the twins. She flew back up into the air after that. "It worked. I can't believe it actually worked!" He exclaimed then the branch began to snap from under him.

"I've got you." I said. Shadow used his blazing speed to swoop under Fishlegs as he fell and was able to catch him on his back. "That hand gesture thing you just did with Meatlug, what was that all about?" I asked after turning to look at him.

Hiccup flew up beside me, "Yeah. I'm a bit curious myself."

"Well, if you guys must know, I've been practicing hand signals in case Meatlug and I get separated. And they seem to have been well received." He gestured to the Meatlug as she carried the twins.

"Hand signals, that's incredible, Fishlegs!" Hiccup exclaimed.

"Yeah, I know!"

"We need to start working on those right away."

\* \* \*

><p>"Okay, Shadow, fire." I said and made a hand gesture as if I was letting something go. He laid his ears back and fired right above me, I ducked to avoid any sort of stray plasma that could have flown over me.<p>

"Now, let's try a tail slap." I made a half circle with my finger in the air and he followed with a whip of his tail that flew right over me.

"Not bad." I smiled and picked up a spear. I threw it and made a fist, "Catch." Shadow quickly flew for the spear and caught it in his mouth and brought it back to me. He dropped it at my feet.

"Huh, nice one. Now, how about a tackle?" I asked and made a small pushing gesture with my hand. He followed this, too and ran to tackle me. Since I was quite used to this, I just let it happen and my back hit against the stone floor of the academy. "Good job, bud." I patted him.

We all had our attention turned to the twins that, as always, were arguing and this time, it was about their dragons' orders.

"Belch, come." Tuffnut made a 'come here' gesture with both hands.

"Barf, go." Ruffnut pointed away from them.

The dragon tried to split up again but the heads came slapping back together. The twins glared at each other then gave another order.

"Barf, sky." Ruffnut pointed up.

"Belch, ground." Tuffnut pointed down.

The dragon attempted this and the two-headed dragon only did a flip in the air and came crashing back to the ground.

"I win." Tuffnut said.

"What do you think you're doing to my dragon?" Ruffnut asked.

"\_Your\_ dragon? Puh-lease, you've been breathing in Barf's gas again."

"Yeah, so?"

"Guys, guys." Hiccup caught their attention. "Barf and Belch is one dragon. You have to use one signal at a time."

"Good idea." Ruffnut said and as Tuffnut walked away from her, she ordered with a pushing gesture. "Attack Tuffnut." Barf used his head to ram Tuffnut from behind and sent him flying into Snotlout. It was hard enough to knock them both over. "How's that?" She smirked.

"I don't think that's what Hiccup—" Fishlegs began but was cut off.

"Belch, eat Ruffnut." Tuffnut ordered. Belch bit down on Ruffnut and lifted her slightly off the ground.

"Um, ow?" She said, muffled.

"Tuff, come on." Hiccup urged for him to stop.

"Whatever. Belch, drop Ruffnut." Belch let go of Ruffnut and dropped her to the ground.

She shuddered. "I can't work like this." She said.

"Ugh, it's completely unprofessional." Tuffnut said.

"I'm taking my dragon and going home."

"You touch that dragon and I'll—"

"You'll what?"

"I... I don't know, don't rush me. Just... eh, tell you tomorrow." Then both he and Ruffnut ran to their dragon head and began to pull, like it would separate.

"Okay, guys, leave the dragon out of this." I stepped up slightly. "Come on, we can work something out. Okay, it's over."

"Oh, it's over." Ruffnut agreed.

"Yeah, it's so over, it's under." Tuffnut said. The two grunted and decided to leave the dragon that was now blaming the other head for letting them leave and since they both couldn't follow, they were pretty much stuck there.

"Barf, Belch, it's not your guys's fault." I said comfortingly. "This is just a Thorston thing. They'll get over it, they usually do."

The Zippelback looked towards each other then back at me, the considered what I said then went back to snapping at each others necks.

"Don't worry, Al. They'll be back."

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><p>After coming inside the Haddock household, Hiccup and I were greeted by Gobber trying to put the traditional ceremonial belt around Stoic's waist.</p>

"Ah, the ceremonial belt." Hiccup said. "It's that time again?"

"Yep, tomorrow's the annual treaty signing with the Berserkers." Stoic said as he strained while Gobber still tried to fit the belt onto his waist.

"They've got to change that name." Gobber said. "When your chief's Osvald the Agreeable and you haven't been to war in thirty years?"

"Oh, please don't tell me he's bringing that lunatic kid of his." Hiccup almost begged.

"Dagur? Oh, he'll be here."

"Oh, great. And let me guess, I get to keep him from breaking things while Al here fights with him all day and keeps him busy."

"I'll get my hammer." I said and began to walk off.

"Nope. Get back in here." Stoic said.

"Okay." I said and came back inside.

"I actually have more important jobs for the both of you." He said, "Hiccup and Alyssa, you get to hide all the dragons. Afterward, Alyssa, I suggest that you stay away from Dagur."

"Okay, I get why Al has to stay away from Dagur but why hide the dragons from Osvald the Agreeable?"

"Just because we've had peace with them for fifty years, doesn't mean that they still can't go... er..."

"Berserk?" Gobber and I asked.

"Exactly. The dragons can be seen as a sign of aggression. Better blissful than bloody, right?" Stoic said and chuckled a bit afterwards.

"And the last thing we want is another Berserker skirmish." Gobber said. "They tend to play for keeps."

"Just hide the dragons." Stoic said.

"Sir. Yes, sir." I said.

\* \* \*

><p>"Back in line, back in line!" Snotlout ordered to the dragons that he was herding.</p>

"Okay, no, uh-uh. Come on, back over this way." I said to the Nightmare, two Nadders, Gronckle and Terror that tried to fly away. The dragons all began to move back in line when Shadow flew to them on his own accord and gave them warning growls.

"Is Dagur coming?" Snotlout asked. "He's so cool."

"Cool? The last time he was here he used me as a knife-throwing target." Hiccup said.

"Then Alyssa tied him to a tree and threatened to burn him." Fishlegs said.

"No, I didn't." I denied. "I tied up his hands and feet and threatened to launch him out of the catapult."

"That was the year before, Al." Hiccup said.

It took a while for it to register in my head and then it finally rang the bell. "Oh, yeah." I said. "Then he broke free and said if I did that again, I'd be dragon food."

"Seriously, though, that guy should be locked in a cage." Astrid said.

"That's what he did to me!" Fishlegs said. "He wouldn't let me eat for \_three days!\_"

Snotlout laughed as he would and said "Then he forced-fed you rotten cod heads."

"Thanks, I almost erased that from my memory." He said pitifully.

"Look out, incoming Zippelback!" Astrid warned. Barf and Belch flew past us wildly.

"Where's Ruffnut and Tuffnut?" Hiccup asked. "Someone go and get that dragon."

"I'm on it." Snotlout said and flew over Barf and Belch. He jumped off and landed on Belch.

"Snotlout, you need two riders." Hiccup said.

"Or you can have Barf and Belch conjoin their necks by using the red bumps on the back of their neck." I suggested. "That seems easier, doesn't it?"

"Fishlegs, get in there." Hiccup said.

"I'm not really sure this is the best idea!" He said and at the end, Barf knocked him off of Meatlug and caught him on the back of his neck but due to Fishlegs's weight, Barf's gas began to slip out of his mouth. Belch ducked under the gas and kept himself out of the gas's way.

"Hiccup, why don't you ever listen to me?" I asked in frustration.

"Alyssa had a very valid point." Fishlegs said. "It would have been much easier the other way." He gagged a bit. "I don't feel so good."

"It's the gas. Try not to breathe any in." Hiccup said.

"Yeah? That ship has sailed."

"Hey! Somebody tell me how to work this thing!" Snotlout shouted as he climbed up Belch's neck.

"Whatever you do, Snotlout, don't spark!" I said but as I said 'spark' he pinched the skin and scales behind Belch's head and caused him to spark up into the gas. This sent the two flying back but luckily, Hookfang caught them both.

"Okay, now I feel worse." Fishlegs said.

"Then if I were you, I wouldn't think about that rotten cod head \_sliding\_ down your throat." Snotlout said. Fishlegs couldn't hold it in anymore after that, leaned over and threw up off the side of Hookfang. "Oh, that is disgusting!"

"You guys wait here, Al and I will go get the twins to get that Zippleback under control before the Berserkers—" A horn blared.

"Are here." Astrid finished.

"Great. Just great." Hiccup said. "Come on, Al."

We got back to Stoic by the dock. "Dad, there's some—"

"Not now, son. Osvald is here." He silenced us.

One of the Berserker boats landed in front of the dock and laid out a plank so Osvald and the others could come down. A Berserker stood up and held a spear in the air, "Presenting the high chief of the Berserker tribe; cracker of skulls, slayer of beasts, the great and fearsome—"

"Osvald the Agreeable?" Gobber asked.

"Dagur the Deranged!" He finished.

Dagur stood behind him and spit off the edge of the boat. He turned towards us and chuckled his usual, sinister chuckle.

"Dagur?" Stoic asked.

"Deranged?" Gobber asked.

"Oh, no." Hiccup said.

"Just great." I said then straighed up, "Ah, if it isn't my old rival/archenemy."

Dagur had the genious idea to throw a knife towards Hiccup. I pulled him towards me and saved him from the knife, though it was high enough to fly over his head but you can't be too safe.

"Oh, perfect." Hiccup said.

We all gave looks of discomfort to each other then watched as he walked down the plank and towards us.

"Dagur? Where's your father?" Stoic asked.

"My father had been 'retired.' He lost his taste for blood. I, on the other hand, am \_starving.\_" He sang then chuckled. He turned serious after a short moment then looked around, "So, where are you hiding them, Stoic?"

"Hiding what, Dagur?"

"Do I look stupid to you?"

"Ye-" Hiccup covered my mouth.

"Trick question; don't answer it." Gobber warned Stoic.

"We both know what's going on here." He said. "I have an excellent authority that you're amassing an army of dragons."

"Excellent authority?" Stoic asked. "And who would that be, Dagur?"

"Nevermind, just know that if I find it to be true than my armada will attack with the force of 50,000 brave Berserker soldiers."

"Stand down, Dagur. There won't be any need for the armada. Now let's get to the treaty."

"You stay here, I'm going to get Astrid and the others. You can keep Dagur occupied, can't you?" Hiccup said.

"Yeah but Stoic told me to stay away from Dagur."

"Just keep Dagur occupied. No violence, remember that." He said and took off.

"But..." I held up a finger as he ran off and slowly slouched. "This day can't get any better."

"According to the treaty; my visit starts with a tour of Berk, the armoury, the feast in the great hall, the killing area. You do still kill dragons here, hm?"

"Your father never found the tour nessecary." Stoic said.

"As you can see, I'm not my father. Am I?" He taunted. There was a

staredown between the two then Dagur smirked. Stoic reached for the sword on his belt but Gobber stopped him.

"Not in front of the armada." He said.

"Hey, let's do this thing, huh?" I grinned. "A good, old tour of Berk. Let's go. Come, come." I made an excited head gesture.

"Ah, walking, walking." Gobber said. "This is the food storage. This is where we-"

"Ooh, ooh! Let me guess... store your food." Dagur rolled his eyes.

"No wonder they made him chief." Gobber said.

I saw Barf and Belch run by. Hiccup and Astrid followed, "Barf, Belch! Come back here!" He whispered. I smacked a hand to my forehead. This is a disaster so far.

"Boring!" Dagur sang. "I want to see the dragon killing things!"

"Okay, let's go." I said.

It didn't take long for Dagur to get a sword and begin to swing it around. "You want some of this, Gronckle? How 'bout you, Nadder? That's right; plead. Plead for your pathetic dragon lives." He threw the sword into a shield between Stoic and Gobber.

"I'm about to repaint this sword." Stoic said and pulled the sword from the shield. Dagur had already gotten a hold of his own sword and swung it around wildly.

"I'd be glad to accompany you but Hiccup told me not to fight." I sighed with boredom.

"Why don't we get to signing that treaty now?" Gobber asked and put a hand in front of us.

"Sounds like my father. 'Sign the treaty, Dagur.' 'Leave that chicken alone, Dagur!' 'Ooh, ooh! Put down that axe, Dagur!'" He mocked.

"You're father was a great man, and I'll not have you disrespect him." Stoic stepped forth.

"My father was... a coward. I intend to return the Berserkers to their former glory. Something he was... uncapable of doing."

"At least your father showed you some love and respect, lucky man." I folded my arms and looked away. "I was stuck with Slade."

"Ah, Slade." Dagur sighed happily. "The times we've had."

Barf and Belch ran past the door outside with Astrid following them. I slouched a bit and puffed a cheek out after seeing them pass by the door. "Zippleback." Stoic said.

"I knew it! Where is it?" He drew the sword and pointed it around

towards the door. "Let me kill it!"

Gobber feigned laughter and shut the door. "Ah, that Stoic; always the prankster."

Stoic tapped my arm, "Go out there and help them with that dragon." He said and gave a push to me from behind.

I snuck out without being noticed by Dagur. Wait, that's a serious problem. Dagur will usually leave me alone when he has something to say to me. This can't be good. Does he know about the Outcasts? Oh, Thor, help me.

"Al, I thought I told you stay with Dagur and keep him occupied." Hiccup said.

"Stoic told me to help with the dragon." I said. "You know, Barf and Belch." I pointed up as they hung over the door and were latched to the wall.

"Ugh, guys you can't be here!" Hiccup whispered. "Oh, come on. Think like Ruffnut and Tuffnut, I can't believe I just said that. Barf, Belch; sky!" He ordered and began to try and wave them off but they didn't move.

"Okay, Barf, sky!" I said.

Hiccup gave the same order to Belch but they still didn't move.

Dagur's voice came closer to the door and it opened. Hiccup winced and I just stared up at him boredly. "No bloodstains, pity. Ah, Hiccup, there you are. I see that you're still with your girlfriend. How is your relationship so healthy?"

He always gets after us like that. He's been keeping this joke up for years.

Hiccup completely ignored what was said and turned the conversation in a whole new direction. "Dagur! I was just thinking about you. Hey, remember that time we went swimming and you tried to drown me?" He gave a nervous laugh as he spoke.

Dagur mocked a laugh then said "Yes, I also remember your girlfriend 'taught me a lesson' and beat me with a piece of coral she picked up from the bottom of the water." He pointed at me accusingly.

I mocked a laugh right back at him, "Oh, the laughs we had." I said with my hands on my hips. "How about when Hiccup and I were sitting on the edge of the cliff and talking then you came up to push him off but I punched you where no man claims he should be punched?" I laughed again.

"Yes, good times." He said through gritted teeth and walked past us a bit. "Just a minute. Something is going on here." He said.

"Dagur, please I can explain." Hiccup said and I put a hand over his mouth.

"We aren't dating, dang it." I rolled my eyes irritably.

"Where is it?" Dagur asked. Hiccup tried to speak and push my hand away but was unable to prevail. "Your leg." He pointed out and I let go of Hiccup. He looked up and saw that Barf and Belch were gone. "Nevermind, I heard all about it."

"You did, did you?" I asked with a cocked brow.

"Yes, I did." He began to get closer to me. "The two of you, the Red Death, the both of you defeated it all on your own?"

"Uh," Hiccup's voice got higher, "Me? Look at me, how is that even possible?"

"Right? That's what I thought, too." He said and Hiccup sighed but tensed again when he said "But then I heard about the trained dragons and it got me, well, uh, kind of tingly."

"It made you pee?" I asked flatly and he glared at me.

"Train dragons? How would you train dragons?" Hiccup asked.

"I don't know. How would you?" He asked tauntingly.

I cleared my throat, "Anyhow, Dagur." I pushed him away from Hiccup by the chest gently. "Some rocks fell near Raven Point and crushed his leg. We didn't really have a choice." I shrugged.

"Oh, is that what happened?" He moved back towards me.

"Of course it is." I smiled much too sweetly.

He glared at me while my too-sweet smile grew into a dark and manical smirk. "I can easily charge you with threatening a chief." He threatened me. "All it takes is one simple order and and Berserker soldiers will come and take you away. Not to mention, the release of the armada."

I rose my brows with amusement then Hiccup cut in. "All right then, who's hungry?" Hiccup asked to break the tension.

"Oh yeah." I nodded and clasped my hands together. "Dinner time. May I escort you to the great hall, my liege?" I bowed with an arm under my chest towards Dagur in a formal gesture.

Stoic finally came outside and said, "It's this way, Dagur."

"Hold it, I need to speak with Alyssa for a moment." He halted Stoic.

"Can't you speak in the great hall?"

"No. I need somewhere more private." He smirked.

"I'm sure that there should be more than enough activity going on in the great hall so we could just talk there. Now, he said that it's this way, Dagur." I pushed him from behind gently so he could walk in that direction. "The sooner we're there, the sooner that we're able to talk."

We all heard a Zippelback growling and this made Stoic and Dagur turn to Hiccup and I. Hiccup patted my shoulder, "Whoa, Al. Hungry much? You sound like a dragon."

I wanted to smack myself in the forehead but I nodded. "It's about time we get to the feast in the great hall. I skipped breakfast and I am \_starving.\_ And Hiccup, you need to eat, too. 'You need some meat on ya, ya talkin' fishbone!'" I mocked the Viking accent and put an arm over his shoulder.

"Thanks, Al." He responded flatly and rolled his eyes.

"\_This\_ way, Dagur." Stoic repeated and pushed him on then turned back to Hiccup and I. "You two get that dragon under control."

"Shouldn't I be keeping Dagur busy?" I asked. "And I know that you told me to stay away from him but you're going to have to trust me. And if whatever he has to tell me is important, I'll tell you if it serious."

He inspected me up and down to see if I was lying and finally sighed, "Then yes, you may come and 'keep Dagur busy.' Just be careful with him. You'll never know what tricks the deranged monster will do, especially as chief."

"Please, I'm just as insane. I threatened to shoot him out of that catapult, remember?" I laughed and walked off.

\* \* \*

><p>"Finally, now Alyssa, come here. We have something to discuss." Dagur said and I sighed.</p>

"Sure thing." I walked to where he was and looked at him pure boredom etched across my face. "So you have something that you need to tell me, don't you? Spit it out then."

"I know your secret." He whispered sinisterly with his usual deranged smirk on his face.

"Which one?" I tilted my head innocently. "Okay, if this is about the sword in the armoury two years ago, that wasn't my fault. The shelf fell and it broke."

"What? No, you numbskull." He whacked me in the side of the head and it frustrated me to no end that I couldn't hit back. "I suspect that you still don't know that you aren't a Hooligan." He said rather calmly and ran his fingers over a, well, a dagger.

"Hm? Of course I'm a Hooligan. I was born and raised on Berk." I folded my arms. "Why? Is there something wrong?"

"Yes, that mother of yours wasn't a Berkian at all. She's Berserker." He said it all as if he's known this for years and if unveiling a big secret.

"I know, she told me. The whole village already knows that." I smiled.

See, my mother was indeed Berserker and she had only came and visited Berk during one of their peace treaty signings. She thought much of the homes, culture and whatnot of Berk and after geeting permission from Osvald, she was allowed to stay there.

"Huh? I'm pretty sure that you didn't know that at all. My sources told me." He pointed the dagger at my throat.

I pushed it away calmly and tilted my head innocently once again.  
"Yes, very well. I'm the child of a Berserker. Your point?"

He had his eyes narrowed then decided to smirk once again, he changed the conversation a bit. "Your father, Slade. Amazing man, do you know where he's gone?" He put his hands over his hips.

"Gone?" I said boredly. "He hasn't been around for a while, not like I'm complaining."

"Yes, I know. You have no idea where he is do you?" He asked as he verbally pried at me a little more. The look on his face said that he very well knew the answer, though.

"Hm?" I asked skeptically.

"Never you mind, little Aly." He mocked and pinched my cheek. I let out a low growl of irritation and pulled back while roughly rubbing my cheek. "Well, let the feast begin." He put his hands in the air.

"Sure thing." I said and rubbed the cheek he had pinched harshly still. I laughed slightly as I sat next to Hiccup though. "He tried telling me something I already know, he thought I didn't know I'm half-Berserker. The moron thought that it was a secret."

"Wow, he's really got to catch up on the times then." He looked at the water in his mug. "I mean, your attitude alone says 'I am Berserker! Fear me!'" He mocked the Viking accent that he knows very well I don't have.

"I know." I laughed.

"A toast; to death in battle!" Dagur rose his mug into the air.

The rest of the Vikings stood up with their mugs in the air and cheered "To Osvald!"

Dagur sat back down with a glare on his face which wasn't unusual. "Fine, whatever. 'To Osvald! To Osvald! To Osvald!'  
Blabbedy-blabbedy-bleh!" He mocked then got out a knife and drove into the bowl sitting in front of him with absolute anger coursing through him.

"Aww, someone's getting frustrated." I mockingly cooed.

"Shut up!" He drew the knife out and pointed it at me.

"Try me." I got a wild and crazy look in my eyes.

"With pleasure!" He readied to throw the knife and I only tilted my head with an insane grin spreading across my face, the wild look

still in my eyes.

"How about instead of that cheery exchange, we finally get to signing this treaty and send you on your way?" Gobber suggested and my face fell back to normal, I rubbed my cheeks from the insane grin stretching the muscles in my face.

"Fine, let's sign that treaty. Bring us the dragon's blood!" He announced.

"Uh, did you say..." Hiccup began then I finished for him.

"Dragon's blood?"

Stoic gave somewhat of a nervous laugh and stood up. "Don't be ridiculous, Dagur. Your father and I haven't signed in dragon's blood for years."

"Why would that be a problem, Stoic? Unless, of course, you don't kill dragons anymore." He said the last part tauntingly, as to be expected.

"We still kill dragons." He said.

Gobber decided to cut in, "The problem is; we've killed so many there isn't a dragon within two hundred miles of here." There was a banging on the door then Barf and Belch burst through the door, I smacked a hand to my forehead. Of course that would happen. "Except that one."

"A Zippleback! It's a sign! A head for each chief!" Dagur laughed and pounded a fist against the table then shook Stoic by the arms with excitement. "It's gonna be amazing!" He stood on the table and threw his knife down, "Tonight, we hunt dragon!"

His Berserker soldiers cheered.

"You need to find that dragon before he does." Stoic whispered to us.

"Sure thing." I nodded.

"No, Al, you stay behind and keep Dagur busy." Hiccup said.

"Hiccup, would you stop passing me back to Dagur?" I asked. "I'm going with you guys this time and you aren't going to stop me."

"Al, would you just... oh, fine." He sighed in defeat.

## 26. Twinsanity Pt 2

\*\*snake screamer: Thank you. Well, she may or may not know but if she does, she hardly, if ever, pays any mind to it. Also, Dagur most likely found it as an easy way to approach her.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Alyssa, I have a question." Snotlout asked as we flew over the forest. I looked towards him with furrowed brows, he almost never

asks me questions of any kind unless they're insulting.<p>

"Sure thing. Fire away." I said and gave a small hand gesture for him to go on.

"You don't like Dagur at all, right?"

"No." I said skeptically.

"So if you don't like him, why don't you do to him what you sometimes do to me?" Snotlout suggested.

"'Cause he's a chief now and has a huge army on the shore waiting for war if anything goes wrong." I snapped slightly but calmed down after taking in a short and quick breath. "Besides, remember earlier when we were discussing what I've done to him in the past?"

"Uh-huh." He nodded for me to go on.

"Well, I have done worse to him than I'd ever think of doing to you." I informed. "Believe it or not, he's much more annoying than you'll ever be. But still, Snotlout, your attitude really needs to improve. You just enjoy to push things past their limits."

"Al, could you come fly over here?" Hiccup requested and I did so. "Stay away from him before another fight breaks out because now really isn't the time."

"Hiccup, you heard Tuffnut, he went to his dark, soggy, alone place. That could be anywhere." Astrid said.

"Not really. That could only be one place." Snotlout said and we gave looks of disbelief towards him that he didn't say anything sooner. "What?"

"Why didn't you say something?" Hiccup asked.

"Why didn't you ask?"

"Snotlout, we've been looking for them all day." Astrid said.

"And?" He asked and I slapped a hand to my forehead.

"And if you don't tell us right now, I'm going to throw you off that dragon!"

"You really don't understand the urgency of this situation, do you?! Why I oughtta-"

"Al, I made you fly over here for a reason. Knock it off." Hiccup scolded.

"No need to get violent. He's probably at the lost cavern, they used to play hide-and-go-kill there when they were kids." He explained.

"Astrid, you and Snotlout go and check the south entrance of the cavern. Al, Fishlegs and I will take the north." He said and we broke away to go to the other ends of the cavern.

We were at the cavern soon but not soon enough, it felt like. Hiccup stood in front of the cave with a torch in hand, "Search." He said. Toothless gave a low grumble and we all entered the cavern.

After barely a moment of searching, we found Tuffnut. "There you are." I said.

"Ugh, you guys. Would you quit following me?"

Then we heard only a couple of yards or so away, Astrid called out "Ruffnut!"

"Would you quit following me?" She asked.

"Did you guys hear that?" Hiccup asked.

"Duh, it's called an echo." Snotlout said and Ruffnut poked her head out from behind the rock that Tuffnut also laid his back up against.

"Toothless, plasma blast." Hiccup ordered. Toothless tilted his head up and fired into the air.

"What are you doing in my soggy place?" Tuffnut asked.

"This is my soggy place and I'm not sharing it with you." She responded.

"Guys, okay, break it up." I made a timeout gesture with my hands.

"Listen, please, we need to get you guys to your dragon." Hiccup cut in. "It's important."

"Barf and Belch are in real trouble." Astrid said.

"I'll go with but not with her." Tuffnut said stubbornly.

"I'm not going anywhere with her either." Ruffnut said; being just as stubborn.

"Yeah! Wait, what?"

"No, you don't understand. You both have to go." Hiccup said. The two turned from each other and stared at the ground. "Guys, listen; like it or not, you are connected to each other and the two of you are connected to that dragon. Just like me with Toothless."

"And me with Stormfly." Astrid pet Stormfly's nose.

"Us too." Fishlegs added.

"You can't leave us out." I rubbed Shadow's chin and laid my head against his. He let out a deep purr and pushed his head closer to mine.

"We can get you another spoon, another dish, another stuffed yak; what we can't get you is another Barf and Belch." Tuffnut sighed and the two looked away. They were both a bit downtraught and gave

glances towards each other. "Do you think they got any of that?" He asked.

"Listen, I know that I'm not the smartest of us and neither are they but I do know that they must have understood that." I whispered.

"Fine." Tuffnut said. The two spit in their palms and shook each others' hand then banged their heads together. "You know, I did spit a little more on my hand."

"Well, Al, I guess you're right." Astrid said with a smile.

"Okay, let's go, we're out of time." Hiccup said.

"So why is this so important anyway?" Tuffnut asked.

"The Berserkers are holding down your dragon to use its blood for ink." Snotlout said quickly and nonchalantly. We gave looks of disbelief towards his insensitivity in this situation but he only shrugged, "What? Is that not what's happening?"

"You need a serious butt-whooping." I cracked my knuckles and took a step toward him as the meathead laid so casually.

"Now's not the time." Hiccup pulled me aside. "Later."

\* \* \*

><p>"Okay, let's get you guys down there." Hiccup said. We had just seen Barf and Belch walking through a clearing and tried to walk their own separate ways but that didn't work out to well, considering that they're attached to each other.</p>

We were about to begin flying towards the ground so the twins could get Barf and Belch but it was too late, Berserkers threw ropes around their necks and dragged the two to the ground.

"No!" Tuffnut called out in devastation. We all dove the dragons down and hid them in the tall branches of the thick trees surrounding us. "What are we doing here? We have to get our dragon!"

"We can't afford to be spotted by the Berserkers." Hiccup said.

"Who knows? I might." I said and climbed down from Shadow's back. He gave a grumble in my direction that questioned what I was doing.

"Just stay with Hiccup and do what he tells you to, 'kay, bud?" He gave a slow nod and I dropped from the tree to land on my feet.

"Good."

I ran for Barf and Belch but they were still too far off for me to do much of anything. Dagur rose his sword over his head. I took my sword out and prayed to Thor that this would work.

That this would hit the target and not miss.

That this might save Barf and Belch.

I threw the sword. It spun in several circles and I crossed my fingers. I began to pray to Odin and Freya, I prayed to each and

every god I could think of at the time. My eyes widened when it had actually worked.

My sword flew and knocked Dagur's out of his hand. I grinned but put on a straight face so they wouldn't see how ecstatic I was that what I'd done had actually worked!

Dagur glared up at me, "How dare you?"

"How dare you? You promised me a sword fight three years ago but you and I had no access to any swords surprisingly, and you never fulfilled your promise. Now would be a better time than ever, wouldn't it?" I got the insane grin and wild look in my eyes once again. "Looks like I won, too."

"I can easily have you executed on the spot!" He walked to me menacingly and my insane face slowly began to fade into a smile. "I can chop off an arm or a leg without anyone's consent! I am a chief and you are nothing!" He pointed the sword directly at my throat until a voice called out.

"Dagur!" Stoic shouted. "Are we going to slay this dragon or aren't we?" He asked. Dagur gave a glare to me through the corner of his eye and I stood glumly, I leaned over in a slight bow.

"Yes, we are. I can't be wasting my time with nothing." He glared more harshly at me. "As a chief, I believe that there are much more important things that I should be attending to than wasting my time with a worthless wench riffraff."

"Then we will slay this dragon together. In the arena, where dragon killing is done."

Dagur took his sword once again and put it away in its sheath. "Fine. To the arena!"

Barf and Belch both looked at me expectantly as they were forced away from the clearing. I whispered to them, "I promise you're gonna be fine."

"The chief's not gonna let them kill our dragon." Tuffnut said as they began to walk out into the clearing. Ruffnut joined in for the last part, "Is he?"

"He won't have a choice unless we can figure out a plan." Hiccup said.

"I have a plan." Snotlout said. "One word; annihilate!" He made a pointed gesture just as he did in the academy. Hookfang blew fire over Snotlout's head and hit the back of his helmet and that moment, it all clicked inside of my head and I grinned.

"Yes, yes, yes!" I jumped up and down a few times. "That's a great idea, Snotlout!"

"It is?" He tilted his head curiously.

"Yes!" I gestured to him with a huge grin on my face then shook his shoulders excitedly.

"Whoa, whoa. Al, calm down." Astrid said. "No need to throw a party because Snotlout's being himself."

"No, Astrid. She looks like she has an idea and I guess that it's the hand gestures if I'm not mistaken." Hiccup said and gave a grin in my direction.

"Oh yeah." I smirked.

\* \* \*

><p>"Help! Dragon attack!" Hiccup shouted as we ran into the arena.</p>

"The dragons are attacking!" Astrid called out.

Hookfang had his head poking in the academy from the chains and Snotlout gave him the 'annihilate' gesture that Hookfang followed. Hookfang blew fire towards a Berserker.

"What is going on?" Gobber asked.

"Gobber, \_dragon attack.\_" Stoic emphasized so Gobber would pick up on it.

It took a second to click in Gobber's head then he came to the realization, "Oh, dragon attack! Everyone out of here!"

Stormfly and Meatlug came swooping into the arena and the Berserkers readied their weapons. Astrid gave Stormfly a 'tail spine attack' command and Fishlegs gave Meatlug a 'hug' command. Now, I know that doesn't sound too deadly but when a 6,000-pound dragon charges for you and tackles you to the ground, you best be prepared.

"Dagur the Deranged will not retreat!" Dagur said.

Ruffnut and Tuffnut gave Barf and Belch a 'gas' and 'spark' command. They obeyed the commands and sent Dagur flying back. The two gave them the same commands they did back in the academy not too long ago 'Attack Tuffnut' just became an 'Attack' order and 'Eat Ruffnut' became 'Bite.' The two then gave a 'come' gesture and the Zippelback began to walk out.

Dagur was threw a spear in the direction of the Zippelback but I curled my hand into a fist, Shadow saw from the outside of the arena and swooped to catch the spear. He growled and dropped it at my feet with a growl. Toothless followed him in and swooped in for Dagur.

"Night Furies, they \_do\_ exist!" Dagur said.

"Back, you fiend. You will not harm my friend Dagur." Hiccup said and hit Dagur in the face with a shield to make it look like an accident then pointed down so Toothless would pick up his 'plasma blast' gesture.

I spun my finger in a half-circle and Shadow growled and swung his tail, he smacked a Berserker that ran for him and I stood in front of the fallen Berserker. "Save yourself, we'll take care of this."

"Just go and save yourselves." Hiccup said and pushed Dagur to the ground with his shield as he tried to force him out.

Dagur and the other Berserkers ran for the entrance to the arena, he turned back to see Toothless pin Hiccup to the ground and after I made a 'fire' gesture, plasma flew towards me but I ducked down and hid behind my shield. "You owe it to your people!" Hiccup called out with a strain.

I then did a 'tackle' gesture so Shadow leapt onto me and knocked to the ground so hard that my shield and my sword went sliding away from me. I did another 'fire' gesture and he looked uncertain but fired anyway, I rolled out from under him before he could hit me with any fire, though. I grabbed the shield and held in front of my face.

Fire kept flying around wildly, Gobber called after Dagur. "What about the treaty?"

"Consider it signed!" Was all we needed to hear for this to stop.

Everything immediately calmed down and Shadow purred apologetically and rubbed his head against me. Hiccup sat up after Toothless got off of him and it was quiet.

"Well done. I doubt we'll be seeing much more of Dagur the Deranged." Stoic said.

"Let's hope not." Hiccup said.

"True that." I laughed and pet Shadow's head. "Dagur almost killed me again!"

It took us until sunset to get most of the academy cleaned up and I wiped my hands. Snotlout told the others "I still think Dagur's pretty cool."

I was about to say something but the twins ordered Barf and Belch to 'gas' and 'spark' Snotlout. His eyes widened and there was an explosion.

They banged their head together affectionately and the Zippleback followed right after.

"What? I just cleaned that." I complained and gestured to the ground that was now coated over in ash again. I rubbed my forehead. "Eh, I'll let it slide." I said with a beaming smile and immediately eased up. "I'm in a good mood. Now, Snotlout, why is he 'so cool'?" I had to ask.

"Well, duh, he's got some really cool sword skills." I got my sword and flipped it around a few times skillfully. "He's an evil genious." I tilted my head and gave a smirk towards him in a somewhat sinister way. "And he's a big and buff guy."

"Okay, that I can't do." I shrugged in defeat and slipped my sword away into its sheath.

"Al, come here." Hiccup called for me and gestured for me to come over. I did so and gave a nod to him. "Let me tell you; I used to think that \_four \_heads was a little crazy." Hiccup said.

"Where is this going?" I asked uneasily.

"But I'll still take crazy over berserk any day of the week. Unless it's you, of course, I'll make an exception." He smiled. "I mean, I've dealt with you for almost a decade now."

"Hiccup, why do you always do this?" I asked. "You say something really weird and add something on that will touch me emotionally."

He shrugged in response. "Eh, I don't know. Now, let's finish getting this place cleaned up." He clapped his hands once and rubbed them together.

## 27. Defiant One Pt 1

\*\*Iron-Mantis: Thanks. I already have it down so you can look forward to it. :)\*\*

\*\*snake screamer: Thank you. :)\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Lucky me, getting paired with the twins for our search and rescue of the ship.</p>

Now, I know that I'm rather clingy and I stick to Hiccup so regardless that I was paired with the twins, I stuck with Hiccup no matter what anyone else said. Whether I be paired with Snotlout, Fishlegs, the twins or Astrid; Hiccup shall always be my main priority and I stick with him and no one and nothing shall deter me.

Anyway, we had been out all morning and we hadn't seen a darn thing. We flew low over the ocean and searched for any sign but as I said; nothing.

"Why are we even out here?" Snotlout whined, as usual.

"This is our first search and rescue mission." Hiccup said.

"I see a lot of searching but not a lot of rescuing." Snotlout retorted. "Maybe we're going the wrong way."

"How could that be possible? The boat was last seen heading south." I turned back to look at him.

"I say we should fly north." Snotlout said.

"And if Hiccup said to go north?" Astrid asked.

Snotlout thought for a moment, running over what she had just said. "Are you trying to mess with me? 'Cause nothing gets in here!" He banged a fist against his helmet.

"I've noticed." I sighed with obvious irritation.

"Was that supposed to mean something?" He taunted.

"Yeah, it means quite a lot. Especially if you're getting so worked up about it." I replied with boredom in my voice.

"Ugh! Whatever, I'll go north." He tried to force Hookfang north but the Nightmare knew that it would be safer to stick with everyone else. "Hey! You work for me!" Snotlout said and finally forced Hookfang away from the area and flew north.

I saw Hiccup begin to spread a slow smile across his face and I began to do the same. Astrid cleared her throat at Hiccup and he sighed, "All right, I'm on it."

"I'm coming with you." I said.

"No, you're not." Astrid said.

"Astrid, my most sincere apologies but you know that Hiccup is my main priority and regardless of me being paired with the twins, I'll be going after Hiccup and no, they shall not follow." I looked at her with determination. "I'm not asking for permission, I'm leaving without anyone's consent."

She sighed, "We'll keep an eye on the twins for you."

"Let's go, bud." I said. Shadow looked around for a bit then flew back to follow Hiccup and Toothless who we caught up to in almost no time at all thanks to Shadow's speed.

"Al, what are you doing? Go back to the others!" Hiccup said.

"No, I'm with you." I said stubbornly and looked ahead. "Look at the size of that waterspout." I gasped a bit then saw the silhouette of a Monstorous Nightmare in front of only a small portion of the water spout.

"Snotlout, that waterspout's too dangerous!" Hiccup called out for him.

"That's why I'm going around it!" He called back over his shoulder. He began to move in closer, much too close for comfort and not to mention in the wrong direction.

"You're cutting in too close!" Hiccup had warned but it was too late.

Hookfang was flying against the harsh winds and ended up hitting him with such force that sent them spinning and Snotlout was sent flying off of Hookfang, he screamed as he flew around Hookfang was sent flying past Hiccup and I spiralling.

"I'll get him." I said. Shadow dove and caught Snotlout in his talons. "Hiccup, special delivery." I said then Shadow dropped Snotlout off on Toothless's back. "All for you and free of charge."

"Al, is now really the time to be joking?"

I couldn't think of an answer as Toothless began to be pulled into the waterspout. He flapped and Hiccup switched the stirrup a couple of times so they could get away but it didn't work out as planned, the fabric of the tail was torn apart and flew off the rods they were attached to.

They began to spin out of control until I decided to take charge of the situation. "I'll get you." I said. "Shadow, lock your front talons with Toothless." Shadow used his talons to grip Toothless's forelegs. "Okay, now pull!"

Shadow had a tight grip on Toothless and used as much force as he could to try and pull us all back and away from the waterspout but his grip had slipped a bit and we all let out startled cries. He gripped harder and began flapping his wings at an incredible speed but the muscles in his right wing began to tighten and we lost all control of the situation.

Shadow was forced to let go of Toothless and we all shouted as we came down and hit the earth below.

I sat up and coughed several times from the dust and dirt that had gotten picked up. I looked around and saw that I was alone. I stood up and wiped my hands off on my pants then cleared my throat.

"Hiccup! Shadow! Toothless!" I called out for one of them to answer me. If I wanted an answer and if I wanted it fast than I wouldn't have a choice but to call "Snotlout!" But I got no response.

There was something familiar about this place. Something that I couldn't quite place my finger on and I scratched my head a bit. There was just something about the island that didn't feel right.

I began to walk through the rocky terrain and climbed onto one of the tall, dead trees and leaned over a sturdy branch. "Shadow! Hiccup! Toothless!" I stared out to see if there was any movement from the nearby areas and saw something black shift a bit.

I leapt out of the tree and stumbled a bit on my way towards the black mass. It was either Toothless or Shadow, I was fine with either. I leapt over a fallen tree and skidded down the small slope that lead to the dragon. "Toothless?" I asked and went over to his side. I patted his head. "Hey, bud."

He groaned and woke up. He looked alert and concerned, he must have been looking for Hiccup.

"I don't know where he is." I shrugged. "I called out and got no response."

"Al, there you are." Hiccup said and began walking down, "Toothless. Hey, bud." Toothless lifted his head and gave a lick to the side of Hiccup's face to let him know that he was okay. "Oh, thank Thor." Toothless got up onto his feet and then we had realized how torn apart his tail was.

The metal bars were sticking out of every which way and bent into many different directions, the fabric on it was gone and the

connecting rod was beat up pretty badly.

"How are we going to get out of here now?" Hiccup asked and looked closely at the tail.

"You can start by getting me out of this stupid tree." We heard Snotlout's voice ring through the air. We looked around briefly then Hiccup tapped my arm and pointed upwards at a tall tree. He was hanging upside down.

Toothless decided to be the one to get him down and fired at him; knocking him out of the tree and he landed down at the bottom of the tree. We all walked over to him and Hiccup decided to be the first to speak.

"That looked like it hurt." He commented.

Snotlout shook his head.

"Are you sure?"

"Go... suck... rocks." Snotlout said in a raspy and quiet voice.

"Hey, he's back." Hiccup said unethusiasticly.

"Lucky us." I joined Hiccup to say that.

"Hey, where's Hookfang?" Hiccup asked.

Snotlout got up and began to call out for the Monsterous Nightmare. "Hookfang? Hookfang!" He walked around for a bit. "Hookfang, get your butt over here now!" His voice lowered into more of a concerned tone. "Hookie? Fangster?"

"Snotlout, who knows? He might be looking for you." I said to soothe him. "Look, I know that I'm not the nicest person on Berk but I know how it feels to be looking for your dragon and can't find him. Why, I'm going through it now. I'm sure that he's somewhere out there looking for you."

"Yeah right." He blew it off then turned away with his voice low. "Pig-headed dragon."

I sighed and patted his shoulder, "We'll find him." I said reassuringly. "For now, let's try and do what we can to fix up Toothless's tail."

"Al, I'll do it myself, all right?" Hiccup said and was kneeling but with some difficulty because of his leg. "You just go ahead and go look for Shadow."

"All right." I said. "If you need anything, call me."

"Sure thing." He said.

"I'll be on the lookout for Hookfang, too. Just so you know." I told Snotlout then climbed over a fallen tree. "I'll be back."

I walked through a few patches of cobblestones and broken down trees

until I almost slipped off a cliff. I held onto a tree root that was thankfully sticking out of the side of the cliff and used it the best I could to pull myself up.

I pulled myself to the top of the cliff and got back up, I moved away from the cliff. "Shadow, where are you, bud?" I asked. I got no response and I called out a bit louder, "Shadow!"

Nothing.

"Hookfang!" I called out. "Come on, boy, where are ya?" Then after climbing up to a higher point of the island, I saw something fall from a nearby high point and let out a roar. Not just any roar, a Night Fury roar.

I ran towards the area and saw the black mass plummeting to the ground once again. It picked up its head and turned towards me, it leapt towards me and affectionately pounced on me.

I laughed and pushed against him a bit, "Shadow, get off, bud." I said. He did as commanded and tilted his head at me. I stood up and rubbed his head, I checked him over as to see why he couldn't fly and noticed that his right wing was clenched up.

"Shades, bud. What's wrong with your wing?" I touched his right wing and he tightened it more. "Relax your wing, bud." He stared at me for a bit then slacked his wing. I felt both of his wings and noted that his right wing was harder and tighter than the left one. He must have had a knot or pulled muscle in it. "Let's get back to Toothless and the others so I can take care of you."

He nodded and we headed back towards the others and thanks to Shadow's sniffing around, we didn't have too much of a problem. He came running down the slope that led to the others and looked back up to wait for me. I came sliding down and jogged a bit until I was able to stop.

"Oh, so you found him?" Hiccup asked without looking back at me.

"Yep. I couldn't find Hookfang." I looked apologetically at Snotlout. "I'm sorry."

He ignored me and went back to... whatever he was doing, I wasn't paying much attention.

"Shadow, did you see Hookfang anywhere?" I asked. He considered the question and finally shook his head. "That's a shame." I sighed.

"Well, you tried." Hiccup said as he still wasn't looking up from Toothless's tail.

"I guess so." I said. "All right, Shadow. Lie on your belly so I can massage that wing of yours." He laid down and stretched his wing out. I walked over and sat to rub the large wing. He clenched it up occasionally but I did my best to see what I could do for him and what I've experienced is that a rough massage to the knot should ease it up.

He groaned a bit and looked at me, he was enjoying the massage but not the knot in his wing. "I know, bud. I've gotten knots in my arm before from sword-fighting too much. It was right in my wrist and it would be super tight and hurt for a few days but after discovering that the more I rubbed or massaged it, the quicker it went away so I'm doing what I can for you."

He understood and let me do what I had to. It took quite a while, too since Night Furies have a fourty-eight foot long wingspan or so.

Once I was done, he stretched it out as far as he could without hurting it and pulled it back in. He repeated this action a few times then finally stood up and shook himself off. He gave an approving look towards me and gave a grin in my direction.

"All right, nice. Try to fly." I folded my arms and watched him soar as he usually would just for a moment until he descended back to the ground and nodded to me once again.

"Feel better?" I asked. He nodded and stretched it out again before pulling it back once again. It looked much more slacked than it had before. "All right, good. That means progress."

"Since Shadow's wing is better, why not have him fly me out of this dump?" Snotlout asked.

"Because he doesn't like you. He barely likes anyone." I explained bluntly.

"Well, I wonder where he gets that from." He sighed with irritation.

"Oh, shut it, Snotlout." I scoffed and pet Shadow's head as he gave a ferocious growl in his direction.

Shadow couldn't fly with Snotlout since he doesn't like him, Hiccup couldn't leave with him because that would leave Snotlout and I alone which is a disaster waiting to happen and I refused to leave them alone because we all know how Snotlout gets so we were stuck together.

Hiccup had gotten pretty far along with fixing up Toothless's tail. He used some yellow fabric to replace where the red fabric was and he had straightened out the other metal bars on the tail. "All right, that should do it, bud." He said. He tugged on the cord to the tail a few times to open and close it on command. He only had the connecting rod left, he pulled it out so he could fix it up.

"Need some help there?" I asked and stretched after I had gotten up.

"No, I've got this." He said and walked over to a boulder, stuck the connecting rod in and tried to bend it but it only came back up to hit him in the head.

"Hiccup, let me do it." I said and took the connecting rod from him. "You're alright, right?" I asked and bent it the best I could without the boulder, it was almost straight.

"Yeah." He finally responded and watched as I bent the connecting rod.

"Hold on. I need a flat surface." I said. I lied on my stomach, cleared the area in front of me of any pebbles or cobblestones that could have gotten in the way and laid the connecting rod against the ground. I began to bend it once again but it fell over onto its side on the ground and slipped out of my hands.

Snotlout wasn't doing anything productive and was snooping through Hiccup's satchel. He hadn't found much from the looks of it since he began to complain. "There's nothing to eat in here." He said.

"Maybe instead of complaining, you can try and help us." Hiccup gestured.

"Seriously, name one productive thing have you done while we were on this island." I said.

"I am trying to help you." He ignored my question. "I'm trying to teach you about survival. You don't leave home without proper supplies and at the top of that list is food." He held out a buscuit.

"Food? You mean like the food in your hand?" Hiccup asked.

"You mean this day old buscuit?" He gestured to the bread in his hand. "It's even got a little spot of mold right--"

Hiccup walked over and took the buscuit from him. "We've got bigger problems than a buscuit!" Toothless ran over and ate the bread right out of Hiccup's hand.

"Hey, he ate my buscuit!" Snotlout cried. "What kind of dragon takes a man's buscuit?"

"That one." I gestured to Toothless before going back to trying the bend the connecting rod. It was just being difficult now.

"You know, his bad manners are a reflection on you." Snotlout said to Hiccup but Hiccup ignored him and came over to watch me bend the connecting rod.

"You're doing it wrong." Snotlout said. "Move over." He pushed Hiccup aside and took the connecting rod out of my hands.

"Dillweed." I stood up.

He bent the rod in the opposite way of how I was trying to bend it. "No, no! Don't do that, it might--" Too late. The rod had broken in two and Hiccup and I both slapped a hand to our foreheads.

"You wanted two of 'em, right?" He asked.

"Nope." Hiccup shook his head. "That was only chance of getting home."

"It's not my fault your dragon has half a tail!" He exclaimed.

I opened my mouth to yell at him but Hiccup's voice had somehow overpowered mine and shut me up. "Don't you understand? We have no idea where we are!"

"Seriously, we could be on a hostile island." I sighed with irritation.

"Oh, don't be such a baby. How hostile could it be?" Snotlout laid the back of his hand against his hip.

Toothless and Shadow suddenly got low to the ground and growled. We all ran behind a rock. It had a hole in it that was large enough to see out of but not give us away. We were huddled close together and heard the voices of a few familiar Vikings.

"These are wild dragon tracks, all right." A voice said.

"Good, I feel like killing."

"Is that hostile enough for you?" I asked with a glare fixated on Snotlout. We poked our vision through the hole for a bit but eventually had to duck away from it just in case we were to blow our cover.

"Hey, Savage, what are you waiting for? Alvin needs us back at the ring!" We heard the familiar voice of Slade hit our ears. "As we all know, he doesn't like to be kept waiting."

"Yes, sir. Right away, sir." Savage obeyed and we heard them all walk away and looked at them again.

"That was Savage." Hiccup said but was careful not to mention Slade in case Snotlout decided to tell someone. Slade's voice and body aren't very different from other Vikings' so he could easily be mistaken for one or another, that's why people don't usually acknowledge his speaking or his looks. "Guys, we're on Outcast Island."

"\_Great\_." I sighed.

## 28. Defiant One Pt 2

\*\*Iron-Mantis: Yes, I know but I have something a \*\*\*\*\_little\_\*\*\*\* different planned.\*\*

\*\*BloodBendingDancer: I know! That doof!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"So, Al, is something wrong?" Hiccup said over a period of silence. "You aren't being yourself."<p>

"Hm?" I said then shook my head after realizing what he said. "Oh, yeah. Yeah, I'm fine, bud. I'm just bothered; he said that I can't stay away from who I truly am. What if it's true? Why else would we keep coming back to Outcast Island?"

Hiccup looked at the ground, gulped and sighed. "Al, it isn't true. You were born and raised on Berk, right?" He stayed so optimistic

about it.

"I mean, yeah but..." I trailed off as I didn't know what else I could say.

"But nothing. We keep coming here by freak accidents, it has nothing to do with you. If it was, you wouldn't be living on Berk. You'd be living here. Now that I look at it, it doesn't look so bad." He began to joke. "I mean, how do those trees grow so perfectly creepy with so little water?"

I rose a brow in slight amusement but I didn't laugh. Shadow noticed this and nudged me from behind. I turned and pet his head, "Hey, bud. Something wrong?" He gave me a very concerned look. "No, I'm fine. Really." Shadow didn't seem to believe me but went along with it.

As we continued to move onward, there was a chewing sound behind us. I turned and saw Snotlout eating purple berries, I nudged Hiccup with my elbow to get his attention.

He turned and rolled his eyes a bit, "Thor help us." He whispered then increased his volume so Snotlout would hear his caution.

"Snotlout, I'm not so sure you should be eating those berries."

Snotlout retorted as Toothless walked over to his side "Yeah, well, I'm not so sure you should be telling me what to eat. Especially after you took my biscuit!" When Toothless leaned in to sniff them, he pulled back his hand that held the berries and pushed Toothless away with the other hand. "Back off, these are mine!"

Shadow stood casually behind Snotlout then used his tail to swipe his legs out from under him and ran to my side while letting out a huffing laughter as Jorgenson stood up and dusted himself off. "Good boy, Shadow. I didn't even have to order you to do that one."

"His bad attitude are a reflection on you, ya know that?" Snotlout said. He glared at me and Shadow as he gathered the berries off the ground.

"Pardon?" I reckoned. "Your attitude isn't exactly royal material either, Snotlout so I suggest that you should get over yourself and soon because like it or not, we're all in this together."

"Yeah, yeah. Whatever." Snotlout blew me off and I could feel the irritation bubbling inside of me.

"Al, no." Hiccup scolded. I drew my head into my shoulders and looked at him submissively through the corner of my eye.

"Besides, the only reason I'm eating, other than my being hungry at the moment; we're going into battle. We're going to need our strength." Snotlout said.

"Battle the Outcasts?" Said Hiccup with his usual sarcasm. I rolled my eyes and turned to walk away with Hiccup beginning to follow.

"Absolutely." Snotlout said. It was kind of lispy and he blew a small raspberry when he spoke so it sounded like he said 'Abtholutly.'

Hiccup and I exchanged a glance of short confusion. We turned and looked back at him.

"What did you just say?" Hiccup asked.

"I said 'Absolutely.'" He said but still had the same weird sound to his voice. His tongue was hanging limply out of his mouth and was swollen. I slapped a hand to my forehead. Hiccup approached him with frustration.

"For the love of- I told you not to eat those berries!" He scolded him.

Snotlout was utterly confused. "Why? What's wrong?" Hiccup pointed to a puddle of water. Snotlout approached and looked at his reflection in the water, he panicked and put his hands on his cheeks. "Oh, no. I'm hideous."

I sighed and shook my head, Hiccup began to turn his back to Snotlout and spoke calmly after letting out a sigh. "Fine, give me my satchel. I may have something that can help you."

"Satchel?" Snotlout asked.

"No, no, no, no." I glared at him harshly. "Don't tell me that you just left it there."

"Gods, no! If someone finds that 'satchel,' we're done!" Hiccup finished. He used a mock lisp on 'satchel'. "It has the Berk crest on it!"

"Relax." Snotlout said casually. "We're safe. Trust me, no one's going to find it."

"Okay, where'd you leave it?" I folded my arms and glared at him in the eye. "Tell me that, at least. Did you put it under a rock? Stick it in a tree? What'd you do with it?"

He looked down in thought and gave me no answer.

"Exactly as I thought, you left it." My glare intensified. I spoke gravely. "The last we need right now is the Outcasts to come up on our tail and attack us because of a stupid mistake of yours."

"Everyone makes mistakes, Al." Hiccup sang, "You and I know that better than anyone and right now isn't exactly the best time for a fight." He emphasized the ending for me so I'd pick up on it.

"No mistake should be that stupid." I sighed and walked ahead. Shadow shook his head at Snotlout and pounced along behind me. He accidentally hit me from behind with one of his wings and rolled me over a hill. I dusted myself and sat up, "Shadow, what was that for?"

He looked at me apologetically and used his head to lift me off the ground. "Thanks, buddy." I looked over to my left and saw an Outcast building, I was going to recoil to hide but inspected the building further. It was a blacksmith but there was someone inside.

"Al, are you alright?" Hiccup exclaimed and skidded over the side of the hill to join my side with Toothless following suite. I latched a hand down over his mouth and pointed to the blacksmith shop. He widened his eyes slightly then shook me off. "A blacksmith, huh?"

"Yeah but there's someone inside." I said quietly and knelt to the ground. He handed a spyglass to me from his vest.

"Have a look and do some inspecting. I'll try and fix something up for Snotlout's tongue." He said.

"Sure thing." I stayed kneeling for a bit to absorb the surroundings of the blacksmith. "Hm, interesting. Interesting."

"What's interesting?" Snotlout asked.

"The Outcast is eating a sandwich." I responded.

"Al, focus on something besides food, okay?" Hiccup said. "I understand that you haven't eaten in about twenty-four hours but pull yourself together, woman."

"I can try but that doesn't mean that I won't go cannibalistic!" I pulled my face away from the spyglass drastically and gave them a look of hunger and anger mixed together but only out of fun.

"Yep, sure thing, Al." Hiccup was used to that joke, Snotlout wasn't so welcoming and actually jumped when I playfully snapped just then. After briefly glancing at one of the Night Furies spit in a bowl, he looked away and got up, he began to walk off a bit.

"Where do you think you're going?" Hiccup asked.

"Bathroom." Snotlout responded and went behind a few rocks.

When I actually noticed that Hiccup was collecting saliva from our dragons into a bowl and I gave a look of utter confusion, "Hiccup, what are you doing?"

"Well, after you fell off of Toothless, you had quite a few cuts on you from the fall. When we got back from dropping the statue of Thor off at Mildew's lawn, I came back and those cuts were almost healed. Dad brought up to me that he licked your wounds when we got back. I began to put pieces together like whenever Shadow gets injured, Toothless licks him, right?"

"Right." I nodded then realized what he was talking about. "Oh, healing properties." He nodded back with a grin.

"Exactly."

"I kind of figured." I folded my legs and sat down. "I mean, Shadow got poisoned by Stormfly's spikes that one time and Toothless licked his wounds. When Shadow turned out to be fine later, I began to think that they had healing properties in their spit."

"Most likely correct." He said. "Dad even tested it out. He put a small cut on the back of his hand and had Toothless lick it, healed the next day."

"Amazing, isn't it?" I patted Shadow's head after he came up to me and nuzzled me with his large head.

"Sure is." Hiccup said and after stirring up whatever he had put in with the saliva and we saw Snotlout walking back. "There you are. Well, it's finished. Just stick your tongue in and it should heal it right up." He handed Snotlout the bowl and took out the stick he used to stir it up with.

Snotlout moaned an unintelligible complaint but stuck his tongue in regardless. Hiccup sat down next to me and laid on his stomach, "Al, spyglass. I want to have a look for myself." I wordlessly handed him the spyglass and he looked at the inside of the blacksmith shop.

"Okay, I'll just wait until he leaves and then I can go in there and make a new rod." He said and put the spyglass away.

"I can go ahead on in there." I said with a shrug. "It'll be much safer to leave you two alone than me and Snotlout alone, anyway. I can go in there and come back out, as quick as a Night Fury."

Hiccup bit his lip and looked me in the eyes for a few seconds. He gave a nod. "All right, I'll have to keep Shadow off of Snotlout, though. Thor knows how he listens to me."

"Yep, he doesn't." I laughed. "Shadow, listen to Hiccup." I said after looking at my Night Fury. He tilted his head, considered what I'd said, looked over at Hiccup and laid his ears against his head with displeasure.

"He doesn't look like he likes that idea." Hiccup said.

"It'll take five minutes." I said to Shadow. He shook his head. "Please? For me?" He thought about it then gave a groan. He nodded. "Thanks, bud. You're the best." I scratched the back of his neck.

"How long do I have to keep my tongue in here? It's disgusting." Snotlout complained. "I saw them spit in it." He looked towards the Night Furies. Shadow was smirking evilly and Toothless just looked pleased with himself.

"They did indeed." Hiccup laughed. "But Night Fury saliva has incredible healing properties."

"It tastes like yak pies." Snotlout complained with disgust.

"Yak pies are delicious." I said. They both looked at me.

"Well, Al, of course you like it, it's food." Hiccup said. "A meat pie, to be exact."

"Yeah." I nodded a bit goofily and then a hacking noise was heard next to me. I looked to the side to see a fish head fall next to my lap. Shadow lifted it and held it to my face. "Oh, dinner." I smiled and showed them the fish. "I'm willing to share." I sang.

"You? Share? Food?" Hiccup asked.

"You just talked your way out of dinner." I said. "Nah, just kidding. I'll cut it up and get it nice and warm for us all to eat."

"My compliments to the chef." Hiccup joked. "It wasn't much but it was still something."

"No problem." I nodded curtly. Snotlout had finished before either of us had and was mumbling about something. "Well, it's pretty dark now. I say that it would be time to head on out."

"Sure thing, let's go." Hiccup said. We all got up and began to walk off to get to the blacksmith. About halfway there, we heard Snotlout speaking as clear as day.

"And said she 'This butter's bitter.'" He was using a tongue twister and just kept going on and on. Hiccup and I finally reached our limit of frustration and turned to him with obvious irritation.

"What. Are. You. Doing?" We asked with perfect timing.

"Enjoying my tongue again." He responded bluntly.

"At least one of us is." We said together once again. A random Monstrous Nightmare leapt out in front of us and Snotlout jumped up in place.

"Hookfang!" The Nightmare turned to him and shot him down with some fire, enough to send him back but not enough to burn him. "Not Hookfang."

"It's a wild Monstrous Nightmare!" Hiccup exclaimed. Toothless and Shadow were ready to attack until I scolded Shadow.

"No, down." I said. He laid his ears against his head with a growl and pulled back. I stood in front of the Nightmare while Hiccup calmed Toothless, I carefully place a hand out and very slowly dropped it upon the nose of the Nightmare.

Right after, though, an arrow shot over its nose and it pulled away from me to glare at the direction of the arrow which also happened to be the direction of Outcasts.

"Oh, that's just great." I sighed with irritation. The Nightmare flew away and we all began to run from the Outcasts.

"Toothless, circle back around, bud." Hiccup ordered. "Al, keep Shadow with us in case we need it."

"Sure thing. Stay with us, bud." I said softly to him, he grumbled quietly in response. Toothless lead the Outcasts away and we hid behind a rock then lowered ourselves to speak with each other. "All right, now that they're distracted, we can go to the blacksmith and-"

"No, I'm not going anywhere with either of you!" Snotlout shouted. "The two of you almost got us caught!"

"We almost got us caught?" I asked.

"The only reason the Outcasts know we're here is because you left the satchel with the Berk crest!" Hiccup cut in to argue this time. He has clearly had enough and he was done being the bigger man, he was joining in this time.

"Well, who brought the satchel with the Berk crest to Outcast Island?!" Snotlout demanded.

"Well, I had no idea we were going to Outcast Island!"

"So you're not prepared and I get blamed. Hmm." He looked accusingly at the two of us.

"The only reason we're even stuck here is because you decided that you were oh-so-smart and went off on your own and for what? To show that you were a- some sort of big man? That you didn't have to do what anyone told you to? Well, now because of you, we're out here stuck on Outcast Island!"

"Why are you still here? Your dragon can fly so why don't you just fly away just like all of your 'protective instincts' that you have to protect Hiccup because you haven't really protected him at all, have you? He's got a missing leg, got attacked by too many dragons to count, you've left him alone how many times and you're still his 'guardian'? You weren't there when he got struck by lightning and now look at where we are!"

I fell silent. There were a few valid points that he made. I couldn't save him and he lost his leg, he's been attacked by dragons before and I couldn't recall saving him from any dragons at the time, when I first discovered Shadow, I ended up leaving him alone. As for him being struck by lightning, I don't think that happened and us being here had nothing to do with me.

"Don't you talk to her like that." Hiccup said gravely. His tone changed from anger and frustration to grave and dark. "She has done so much for me." His voice had shaken slightly. "She's done a lot more for me than you ever have. She's been by my side, protected me from you, gave me the love, comfort, support that I had always craved for, especially from my family. Snotlout, you're my cousin and you were never there for me. You made it your goal to make my life nothing but a disaster and painful and dark and lonely."

I gulped, this wasn't going to end well. Whenever Hiccup drops his tone like that, he's about to snap. He was already getting in deep, and he's going to keep going.

"You were never, ever there for me! She was." He emphasized for the point to come across. "She accepted me, the only one in the village that had ever accepted me and I'm not going to stand idly by while you continue to talk to her the way you are. We're not kids anymore, I'm braver than I once was. Her and the dragons, they gave me strength to pull through all of this, not you. So don't act so high and mighty, Snotlout, because you're no better than you were eight years ago."

Toothless came running up behind and caught Hiccup's attention immediately. He walked over and rubbed his chin, he calmed down instantly. "Hey, bud. Good to see someone's pulling their weight around here."

Snotlout found it as a chance to retort once again. "Oh, you are so smug, you know that?"

Hiccup's face twisted into one of disbelief and he looked at Snotlout out of the corner of his eye. "\_Me\_?"

I cocked a brow while glaring and growled at him. "What?"

"You too, Alyssa! 'Alyssa's so loyal, Alyssa's so brave. She's so kind, she's half-Berserker.' And as for you," He turned his attention to Hiccup. "'Hiccup's so smart, Hiccup's so brave. He killed the Red Death, he trained the dragons, he's got the metal leg.'"

"I told you not to mock her, haven't I?" He snapped. "And metal leg? That's really where you're going? 'Metal leg'?"

"No, it's everything the leg is attached to and what's attached to you." He retorted.

"Well, deal with it, Snotlout. Because as of right now, we are literally all you've got." I cut in with a snarl. My body was shaking because every ounce of willpower I had was the only thing holding me back from busting him in the face. My teeth sinking into my tongue so I didn't send Shadow after him. My hands were clenched into tight fists for so long that my knuckles were a bright white.

"You think I need you? Either of you? I don't need you!" He stormed off.

"And we don't need you! Go!" Hiccup shouted back. He looked back at me and shrugged. "It's him, right?"

After seeing Snotlout leave, I had to release the energy and anger pulsing through my body. Shadow must have felt it because he laid his ears against his head submissively and took a few steps away from me. I ran to the nearest tree and punched it as hard as I could. I felt pain shoot straight up my arm and blood trickle down my hand.

"Al, what are you doing?!" Hiccup exclaimed with concern and ran to my side. "You're going to get--"

He was cut off when I turned to look at him, he looked absolutely speechless. The look in my eyes was a bottomless pit of sadness, Snotlout's words had raced through my head a mile a minute.

Hiccup gulped audibly and reached out for my shoulder, I shrugged harshly, pulled back and turned away from him. I didn't sense him come any closer or move away any farther. He was frozen in place.

It was a deafening silence. No chirping birds, roaring dragons, crickets, shouting, no noise at all. Silence.

I took a deep breath and swallowed the lump in my throat that I was unaware had formed. Without looking at Hiccup, I began to speak.

"He's right, you know."

"Right? Snotlout is hardly ever right about anything, let alone about

us. I mean, what does he know about us?" I could hear his awkward grin in his voice. He was trying to lighten things up a bit but it wasn't working.

"Enough." I answered his question and gulped again. I stared off into the distance and leaned against the tree, I inspected my messy knuckles. "He knows that I'm a failure as a friend to you."

I could hear Hiccup jump back a bit at my words. "What?! Al, what are you talking about?" He came around and looked me in the eyes. "What's going on?"

"When he said that-... that I wasn't fit to be your... 'guardian'... it must have been true." I shook my head; not wanting the realization to overcome me as badly as it had.

"Huh? Al, you've done more than enough for me." He pleaded slightly.

"Yep, sure." I said with sarcasm. "What I'm trying to say is; as soon as we get off this island, we're going our separate ways."

"Alyssa, you're being crazy!" He grabbed my upper-arms and stared up into my eyes. "You can't honestly mean that, can you? You and I, we've been together since we were five! You can't leave me now, please. Not now, not ever."

"It keeps you safe." I said sternly. He leaned back slightly then forward again.

"Al, when the lightning struck you and I found you, unconscious on the forest floor, I thought you were dead." His voice broke more than once while saying this. "I felt a huge piece of me... die. As soon as I found out that you were alive, I wanted to do everything I could to bring you back. You are and always will be my guardian angel."

"I will continue to be your guardian angel." I said in a monotone voice, broke from his hold and turned my back to him once again.

"I'll protect you by not being around you. When you're around me and sometimes even when you're not, terrible things happen to you. And if you retrace the steps, it all leads back to me."

"Name one." He begged and I heard his metal leg clink against the ground as he took a step towards me. "Just name one time that you've been the one to cause harm to me."

"When I left you alone." I said. I don't know why that was the first thing to come to mind but it was. "I left you all alone when I first discovered Shadow. You were all by yourself through all of it. The threats, the angry jeering, the... the-"

"The loneliness." He finished. "Is what hurt me the most. Not knowing where you were, how you felt, what you were doing, why you were gone, when you'd come back... that's what really hurt me. If you leave me again, it'll just be like that everyday for me. You don't understand, I probably wouldn't have survived all those years on my own."

"Hiccup, I'm going to hurt you to protect you. Understand that, at least. I'll go make that new connecting rod, I trust that you

understand why I'm doing this and believe that I have good intentions. Though the parting hurts, I know you'll push through. I promise that I'll never be too far."

"What are you talking about? Please tell me that this is just another prank. Tell me that it's your Berserker side coming out and making you behave like this." He grabbed the front of my tunic just below the collar. "Or even your Outcast side that's somehow weirdly messing with your mind. Just tell me that this isn't real."

"It's real." I sighed and looked away. "The gods must keep forcing us towards the Outcasts for a reason and it's because of me. I'm doing this for your sake. I'll fix Toothless's tail then you guys leave from Outcast Island, don't ever come back. I'll stay, you go. Don't tell me otherwise." I got his hands and removed them from my tunic. I patted them comfortingly.

He continued to look at me with complete and utter disbelief. "I won't let you do this."

"You have to."

"I'm not leaving without you." His voice rose.

"It's to protect you, Hiccup! What part of that don't you understand?"

"All of it! Why would you abondon me?"

"It'll be for your own good." I said gravely and began to walk away.

"Al, no." He said desperately. "You can't be serious." I heard him running up behind me and latch onto my arm. "Why aren't you listening to me?!"

His sudden grip on my arm shocked me and I forced my arm back and shoved him back. I turned to speak to him. "At least give me time to clear my head then! This has me so screwed over, I don't know my left from my right anymore!"

I had only then noticed that he was on his back on the ground, breathing heavily and eyes wide. He was shocked and frightened by what I'd done.

I must have done that when I used my arm to push him away.

I looked down at my hands as if I was changing into a monster.

That's what I was becoming... a monster.

"Al?" Hiccup shook his head in disbelief. "Alyssa?"

"I'm so... I'm so sorry." I said.

Hiccup began to get up and approach me. He held a hand out to reach for my shoulder. "Listen, Al-"

I leapt away from him and taking deep breaths. I shook my head,

"Don't." He stared at me questioningly and took another step for me.  
"Just don't. Stay away from me, I don't want to hurt you."

He continued to give me a look of hurt and confusion. "I'm sorry." I began to back away but he took a step to follow. "Don't you dare follow me! Any of you!" I turned and ran.

I can't believe that I had shoved him to the ground. I can't believe I just shouted at him for no good reason. I hadn't done that before, the stress and raging emotions caused me to snap at him the way I did.

I laid my back against an old tree and put my head in my hand while I slid to the bottom and my butt hit the ground. I could feel my eyes burning with tears that began to fall.

I looked towards the deep, starry sky the best I could through the tears.

"Oh, gods... what have I done?"

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup panted and leaned up against Toothless. He laid his head down against his dragon and clenched his eyes shut like a child not wanting to see the monster they believed was in the closet. Like this was a terrible nightmare that he'd wake up from but it wasn't.</p>

The pain residing in his heart had him consumed and he didn't have any words to speak. He was deadly silent except for his heavy breathing.

"Shadow, bud..." Hiccup took a deep breath with eyes slightly wet in the corners that he quickly began to dab away. "What do you think's wrong with her? I mean, this is just some messed up joke, right?"

He didn't hear a comforting purr, or a groan, grumble, or even a growl. He didn't get a response from his friend's Night Fury. He felt the need to look around but saw it nowhere. His breathing hitched slightly after not seeing him.

"S-Shadow? You're not serious, right?" He panted and fell back against Toothless. "I can't believe this, bud. They're all leaving. Is it me?"

Toothless purred affectionately and rubbed his nose against the side of Hiccup's head. The dragon gave a gentle lick to the side of his head to comfort him.

Hiccup only sat and let his dragon comfort him as he held his knees tightly and thought deeply.

What had he done wrong?

Was it destined for him to be so alone?

Why was it just now that everyone began to leave?

Then his eyes widened slightly. He repeated the words that he

recalled Alyssa speaking, "'At least give me time to clear my head then.' She's confused, that's it." He sat up and felt a bit better after remembering that. "Of course, all of this got her stressed out and she even indirectly said that it was taking its own toll on her.

"I'll give her time for herself for now. Shadow probably went after her so I shouldn't be worrying. Al should also be making that new connecting rod for you so we can count on finding her in the blacksmith."

Toothless let out a concerned trill for his rider. "Toothless, I'm fine. Besides, Al and Shadow are fierce. What could go wrong?"

### 29. Defiant One Pt 3

\*\*Iron-Mantis: Wow, didn't think that I'd accidentally hide an Easter Egg in here. I completely forgot that the Outcasts were cannibals. And thank you.\*\*

\*\*skyblu123: I guess so. Thank you.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I'd been working on this connecting rod for some time now, I wanted to make sure that it was done as soon as possible so Hiccup could leave and hopefully not come back. The last thing he needed was to be around me any longer and get himself even more hurt than he already has been.</p>

"Al!" I heard Hiccup call out.

For the love of Thor. Keep away from me.

I put my hands up in surrender, whatever he has to say to me now, let him say it. My desicion is made. He saw me through the bars of the blacksmith and squeezed in with less trouble than I had since he was smaller than I.

"I'm making the connecting rod for Toothless." I responded flatly and dipped the rod in water to cool it down. I lifted it to inspect the shape and ran my fingers over it.

"Thanks, Al." He said. I couldn't look at him, I'd shoved him aside earlier and the guilt didn't allow me to look in his direction. He walked around and used a hand to push my face to the side a bit so I could look at him.

My eyes widened when they locked with his. He just stared me in the eye for a second and gave me a tight hug. "Please, don't ever leave me again. Don't storm off like that, just stay with me, please?"

I wrapped my arms around him like it would be our last hug ever and kept a tight but not too tight of a hold on him. "I can't promise you."

"I'm not asking for you to promise me. I'm asking that you just don't leave me like you have been."

"There is no guarantee." I sighed.

"For now, at least. I just... need you. You have no idea how much."

"I do know." I said in a heartbroken tone. "More than once, I thought that I'd lose you. When you fell off Toothless's back into the flames exploding off the Red Death, each and every time you were attacked by a dragon, I don't know why I was so unable to help. I could have lost you any one of those times and though I promised to stay by your side, I had failed each time. I need you by my side but I'm afraid of hurting you."

"You won't hurt me." He insisted.

"Then what did I just do back there?" I asked.

"What you did back there didn't happen. It wasn't you."

"You're right, it wasn't. It's some sort of monster that I've been becoming. Promise that you'll leave as soon as the connecting rods done."

"You said yourself that we're all in this together." Hiccup gripped my shoulder. "There is no way I'm leaving without you. I don't know if you've forgotten but I already said that I'm braver than I once was. I'll stay with you if it costs me my life."

The hardened look on my face melted into a softer one that had shock in it. Hiccup looked around briefly then scratched the back of his head.

"What are you looking for?" I asked gently.

"Shadow's with you, right?"

"No." I answered skeptically. "Do you mean he's not with you?"

"Did I say that?" He asked and looked away from my harsh gaze.

"Pretty much." I snapped slightly. "Why'd you let him go off on his own?"

"I thought that he might have went after you. I didn't even know he left." Hiccup defended.

"Well, that's great." I handed him the rod. "Merry Snoggletog. I have to go find my dragon."

He took the rod from me and put it on the table next to us. "Alyssa, stop being like this."

"Concerned for my dragon?" I asked flatly.

"No, not that. Why do you always think you're such a monster? Why do you think that I don't want to be around you because you did something stupid? We all do stupid things, we all make mistakes. Why are yours so bad?"

"Because my mistakes have hurt you. And why am I a monster? I'll tell you why; because I'm half-Outcast and half-Berserker. It's just a matter of time until I reach my breaking point and seriously hurt someone. I love you with all my heart, that's why I won't allow myself to think you're ever safe. You'll never be safe as long as I'm around."

"Al." He sighed and held my hand that I used to punch the tree. I winced slightly at the sting, he noticed this and switched hands. "Listen, when you truly love someone, you'll take the good with the bad, right? I was a village outcast and you admired me, you stuck by my side and didn't care what anyone else said, because of that got you outcast just like me.

"You took the bad that came with the good. I've been doing the same. All of the fits of anger, each arguement, every little thing about you, is why I love you."

"I love you, too, Hic." I smiled and we gave a brief hug. "Hiccup, just so you know, this doesn't mean that I'm going home. I might but I doubt it. It just depends on how I'm feeling later."

"I sure hope so." He said and scanned over the connecting rod. "All right, good. Yeah, this'll work."

He walked for the bars again to exit but I grabbed him and pulled him back from them. I glared in the direction of the bars and squinted to see if I could see anything, "Don't move."

"What is it? Al, what's gotten into you?"

"There's someone outside." I said.

"Oh, it's Toothless. I'm having them keep the perimeter secure." He responded. I was skeptical but ingored it and let him go. He gave a smile in my direction that said many different things but mainly said 'My guardian angel...'

"I have to protect you. That's why I was so desperate to leave."

"Alyssa, would you ever really leave me?" He asked suddenly and stopped me on the spot.

I actually put some thought into this one. Leave to protect, stay to protect. Would he still get hurt either way? Would I leave to make sure he was kept safe? Would I stay to make sure he was kept safe? What would I do? And why?

"No." I finally answered. "I wouldn't be able to. I couldn't keep myself from you, Hiccup. That's another reason why I wanted you to leave Outcast Island, you could have taken Shadow with you and then you all could leave... so I could end it."

"End wh..." Hiccup looked at me in disbelief. "You mean that- why\_ would you? Why would you do that?"

"How many times do I have to explain? It would keep you safe, both from me and the dangers that follow me. I would have written a note to the Outcasts and have it say that I killed you and then myself so

they didn't invade Berk anymore. It would have kept the Outcasts off your case."

"You were going to \_what\_?!" He snapped. I had actually fallen back onto my butt and scooted back at the sharpness in his voice. I scooted as far back as I could go until my back hit the shelves of the blacksmith then I used my arms to cover my head and curled up, my eyes clenched shut and hands holding on tightly to my hair.

"What makes you think that \_that\_ would have made things any better? Do you know how many souls you'd hurt by doing that?"

"Four?" I asked hesitantly and peeped up at him though a barely open eyelid.

"A lot!" I curled up tightly at his voice again. "Shadow, Toothless and I would get the worst of it, \_guaranteed\_ but I know for a fact that many others would be hurt too! The dragons, for one. Fishlegs, you and him sharing dragon knowledge. Astrid, you and her engaging in violent conversation. Dad even thanked you for keeping me safe for all these years!"

I felt myself begin to shake and fear inside of me. I don't know why I was afraid but that's what I felt over everything else.  
Fear.

"Remember how devastated I said Shadow was after you got struck by lightning? How devastated do you think he'd be if he found out that this time you had actually died? \_Died\_? Really, Al, what do you think?"

I gulped heavily and opened my mouth to speak but found no words to speak so I only slowly shut my mouth again.

"Exactly. It doesn't matter to us when you've done something bad, we only care about what you'd done that's good. All of the positive, life-changing things you've done is what matters to us, nothing else. We \_love\_ you. We love you with our entire being. So, Al, what are you going to do?"

I was silent for a bit. It didn't require much thought, just some time for me to swallow my fear enough to speak.

"I'm staying." I said quietly. "I'm staying with you."

Hiccup faded back down into his normal self. He held out a hand to me, "I'm sorry."

I gave a smile to him and took his hand just for the comfort and helped myself up. I put an arm over his shoulder and gave an affectionate shake then gently placed my forehead on the top of his head for a brief moment then pulled back.

"Don't be sorry. I'm sorry. Thank you for everything." I patted his shoulder gently.

"Well, that's what friends are for." He patted me on my back.

"And how are we this night, kids?" A voice asked.

"Hi, Savage." I waved awkwardly.

"Oh, hey." Hiccup drew himself into his shoulders. "We were just making a gift for Alvin to thank him for his hospitality." He held out the connecting rod in his hands.

"You can thank him in person." Savage said. The Outcasts with him came around and got a hold on both Hiccup and I. Hiccup struggled to no avail, while I trashed around wildly to some avail.

"Hey, it's Hudson's daughter." One of them said.

"I can see that. He'll be so glad to see his little girl again."

"Cut the crap." I said flatly.

"You don't want to talk to a full-blooded Outcast like that, trust me. We can easily have you killed here." He laughed. "Slade wouldn't mind, I'm sure."

"Oh, okay. I'll watch my tongue." I smiled sweetly then it became too sweet very quickly. "Wiry haired, fish-and-ale-reeking, half-witted, son of a half troll, rat-faced, munge buckets!"

"Al, let's not start." Hiccup said softly.

"You have quite the vocabulary, mi'lady." Savage put a hand up and cupped my chin. "But I don't suggest that you speak to Alvin like that. He'll have terrible things done to you."

I glanced down at his hand and without a second thought, I bit down as hard as I could. He pulled back and got his skin torn open slightly. I spit at him afterwards. "Don't touch me."

For some reason I felt the need to lick the blood off my lips and glared back up at them.

"Oh, feisty, aren't you? I guess that you aren't called Alyssa the Awful for nothing." He laughed then hissed in pain. "You've got some sharp teeth on you."

"And a sharp mouth." Hiccup commented. I looked over at him slowly. "Kidding." He defended.

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless just got finished fighting a wild Gronckle. He ran up to the blacksmith to see Hiccup and Alyssa gone. He looked around in alarm and looked to the side to see that the two were being carried away by Outcasts.</p>

They came across a beach where Snotlout had a raft made. He sent it out into the water, "Take \_that\_, guys." He laughed and leapt onto the raft as it floated on the water. He saw that it was able to float and jumped up and down to cheer himself on. "Yeah, it floats! Snotlout, Snotlout! Oy, oy, \_oy.\_" His voice became down draught at the end since the raft sunk into the water.

He washed back up on the beach. "I'm glad neither of them were here

to see that." He felt a presence near him and opened his eyes to see green ones staring back at him. He gave a cry of alarm. "Toothless! What do you want?"

Toothless ran down the pathway that he came from and pranced in front of it a bit. Snotlout was unable of understanding so far. Toothless ran up behind him and gently shoved him along.

"Oh, I get it. They need my help." He said and ran after Toothless. Shadow sighed and flew after them.

After they reached the blacksmith, Snotlout forced himself in by kicking the door open. The Night Fury stayed outside as he looked around, "Stupid dragon, there's no one here." He said and stepped on something. He looked down and saw the connecting rod. He bent over and picked it up to reveal an Outcast behind him.

Toothless growled a warning to him and he turned around sharply. Snotlout began to fight the Outcast by using the connecting rod as a weapon. He finally knocked him against a wall and smirked at Toothless. The man ran for Snotlout again but he shoved him in Toothless's direction, Toothless headbutted him and the man went flying across the room and this time, the Outcast was knocked out for good.

"Toothless, we make a pretty good team. I might not give you back." Toothless scowled at him, "Kidding." Snotlout squeaked. He looked up he saw more Outcasts but with Hiccup and Alyssa.

"Let's get 'em, Toothless." He got on Toothless and the two ran off.

\* \* \*

><p>"Where's the rest of your party?" Savage stopped the group and smirked at us.</p>

"Oh, we're the only ones that came." Hiccup said. "We heard that Outcast Island's beautiful this time of year and- should we tell them?"

He had something really off the wall hidden up his sleeve and I knew it. I nodded to him. "Only if you want to."

"We're engaged and this is our honeymoon!" He said with a big smile and put an arm up over my shoulder. I used all of my strength to hold back my laughter and force my smile down into a frown. It was almost unbearable about how funny and random that was.

"Well, when we get you two to Alvin, he'll get it out of ya." Savage said and turned around.

"I don't know, Savage. The Hudson lass is blushing, it could be the truth." One of the more gullible Outcasts said. I wasn't blushing, my face was red from holding back my laughter.

"Sure, sure." Savage rolled his eyes. "Even if they were, I'm sure that they wouldn't have come here."

We began walking again and Hiccup kept trying to convince them as to

why we were here for our 'honeymoon'. I held down my laughter the best I could.

"Seriously, she said that she wanted to get in touch with her Outcast roots and I supported that so I said 'Sure, let's go.' That would be why the dragons aren't with us. Why don't you believe me?"

"Then where's your boat?"

"Scauldron." I said.

"Crashed." Hiccup said at the exact same time. We glanced at each other and I covered us up hopefully. "Crashed by a Scauldron."

"Sure. Whatever you say." Savage sighed with irritation. "Now, quiet down, would you?"

"Can we at least share the same cell?" Hiccup asked. "I need to be with my darling wife."

"You're the wife in this relationship." I said and he pouted up at me. A few of the Outcasts snickered.

"Darling, why would you embarrass me in front of friends?" He asked. Okay, he was just having fun with this thing now. "You know how that makes me feel."

"It's the truth." I responded.

"Who wears the pants in this relationship?"

"Both of us." I answered.

"Would you both shut up?!" Savage snapped. "You're both getting on my last nerve and I've just about had it. I'm sure that Alvin wouldn't mind if we brought you back with a few cuts and bruises."

"See, Al, this is why we have no friends." Hiccup said.

"Yep, they all turn out to be whackos." I was finally able to laugh.

"Shut up, shut up, shut up." Savage muttered to himself. Hiccup and I looked at each other with a soft laugh. It's so fun to irritate Outcasts that weren't me.

The walk continued quietly for a bit and when Hiccup opened his mouth to speak once again, a large pile of rocks and boulders fell in front of us and made us all go running back. A shot of plasma against the other side of the path made more boulders and rocks fall and keeping us trapped there.

Hold on... that was plasma. And where there's plasma there's-

I looked up and saw Toothless, and only Toothless, leap into the small area that we were all trapped in along with Snotlout.

I pulled out my sword and twisted it in my hand once. I ran towards

an Outcast that had been thrown to the ground. He got up and pulled his own sword out.

The Outcast I fought went down quickly and easily, especially since while I kept him busy from the front, a connecting rod hit him from the back. It got him in the back of the neck and he went down. I heard Hiccup grunting and looked to see an Outcast holding Hiccup back.

A growl erupted from my throat, I ran to the Outcast and tossed the sword at him. It cut his arm a bit and he glared up at me, the connecting rod made a reappearance and flew at the Outcast's head, hitting him square in the face and loosening his grip on Hiccup. Hiccup got the connecting rod and hit the man in the side of the head and hard.

"Remind me not to get on your bad side." I said and retrieved my sword. They'd been defeated so far and all that was left was Savage. We all turned to him.

Since fighting a Night Fury and three Viking teens isn't the best idea in the world, he decided the smartest idea would be to run. Snotlout followed and shouted wordlessly at him. I rose my brows in amusement.

Hiccup slipped the connecting rod into the tail and made sure it worked, got on Toothless and they flew into the air. Toothless picked me up and threw me up on his back.

Hiccup turned around and zoomed through to pick up Snotlout and he was caught soon enough in Toothless's talons. Toothless chucked him onto his back behind and he landed just behind me. We did so and flew with them, Toothless spun around a few times to escape the weapons that were thrown at them.

We escaped the island and flew off with a whooping "Whoo-hoo!"

"Did you see what we just did?" Hiccup exclaimed.

"We totally kicked butt, duh!" Snotlout answered.

"Yeah and we kicked butt together!" Hiccup said back. He gave a nod to me, I nodded back. We looked towards Snotlout, "Listen, Snotlout, Al and I are—"

"Hungry, right?" Snotlout pointed and smirked.

Hiccup and I couldn't help but let out a soft laugh and shook our heads. "Yeah." Hiccup nodded.

"Hiccup, let's not go on another honeymoon to Outcast Island, okay?" I said.

"Yep, sure thing." He laughed softly. "Hey, what's that up there?"

I looked ahead and squinted my eyes to see dragon outlines, "I think that it's dragons. Not a single one looks like a Night Fury."

"We'll find him, I promise." Hiccup said. "He could have gone home to get help."

As we got closer to the dragons, they became more and more clear; a Nadder, a Zippleback, Thunderdrum, Monstrous Nightmare and a Gronckle. We came to recognize them as the dragons from Berk that belonged to the other Viking teens.

"Hey, guys!" I waved; happy to see them. Toothless came and flew next to the other dragons.

"We're back!" Hiccup said with his arms slightly in the air. Hookfang tapped Snotlout on the shoulder with his snout and made him turn to face him.

"Hookfang!" He exclaimed. Said dragon bit down on Snotlout's torso lifted him off Toothless and carried him in his mouth. "I'm still mad at you!"

"Hey, you guys didn't happen to see Shadow, did you?" Hiccup asked before I could.

"I don't think so." Astrid said.

"No, we didn't see him." Stoic said. "Why isn't he with you?"

Hiccup looked back at me and bit his lip before turning back to his father. "It's a long story. But long story, short; he flew off and we don't know where he went."

"I'm sorry to hear that." Astrid said. I didn't respond and looked to the sea below with a heavy gulp.

Hiccup smiled, deciding to change the subject and turned back to look at me. He looked me in the eye and said "Well, Al. Snotlout was pretty reliable, wasn't he?"

"Yes, he was. He and Toothless saved both of us and thank goodness he brought the connecting rod."

"Who knew that we could rely on him so much?" He shrugged. I put my head down and turned away, there was still a deep and tired emptiness that was inside of me. Shadow was gone and I didn't know where he was, I felt so hollow. Hiccup noted this and leaned back a little more, "Al, we'll find him. I promise."

"I sure hope so." I sighed and leaned over on him slightly. I wrapped my arms around him and leaned my chin onto his shoulder. "I'm really just hoping he's okay."

### 30. Breakneck Bog Pt 1

\*\*Iron-Mantis: Yep. Getting a little more of a backstory and/or something completely new to the story happening is interesting. And then we've got lovable Al, the guardian/sister. :)\*\*

\*\*snake screamer: Well, remember, she wasn't thinking clearly because of all the stress/emotions that she could have been feeling at the time so she didn't think about the plan the whole way through.\*\*

\*\*skyblu123: Thank you.\*\*

\*\*BloodBendingDancer: There's only one way to find out. ;)\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Al, you want to come with us to look for Johann?" Hiccup asked carefully. "I think that some fresh air would do you some good, too. You haven't been outside ever since we got back from Outcast Island. You haven't been eating much and you've been sleeping almost all day. Come with us, please?"<p>

"I don't particularly want to but I know that I'll probably have to because you'll force me into going anyway. I'll go ahead and ride Toothless with you because I refuse to get on any other dragon." I said harshly.

Hiccup understood why I was acting this way, I have been ever since returning back to Berk. I've been talking to everyone with a harsh tone, sarcastic remarks, rude comments and whatnot.

Shadow wasn't here on Berk, he wasn't in the cove, he wasn't on Dragon Island, he was gone and I had no idea where he was. I refused to believe that he was still on Outcast Island, there was just no way. He was somewhere but I have not a clue on where. About a week and no sign of my dragon, Toothless was even acting a bit differently after not having Shadow here.

"All right, let's go ahead and go." Hiccup said optimistically.

\* \* \*

><p>"Where is he? He's been late before but never this late." Stoic said. He was talking about trader Johann. Hiccup and I followed behind on Toothless.<p>

"Are you sure Trader Johann even has it?" Gobber asked. He was riding with Stoic on Thornado's back.

"I'm sure." Stoic said and began to list who told who. "I heard from Jorgeonson who heard from Stevenson the Shephard, who told that Toadstat the Fisherman, who said he saw Johann put it on his boat himself."

I shook my head from the information.

"Too much for ya, Al?" Hiccup asked.

"\_Way\_ too much." I responded.

"Well, it doesn't get any more surer than that." Gobber said.

"You know, it might actually help if we knew what we were looking for." Hiccup said.

"We're looking for Johann, that's all you need to know." Stoic said.

Hiccup looked at me with a shrug and a look of confusion on his face. I shrugged back and hummed an "I don't know."

We came back to the docks and landed. Stoic got off with a distant and thoughtful look on his face. Gobber put his hand up on Stoic's shoulder, "Don't worry, old friend. It'll arrive safely and in good time."

The two older Vikings walked away from us and Hiccup and I looked at each other. "You thinking what I'm thinking?" Hiccup asked.

"Um... hopefully, Johann has some information on Shadow?" I tilted my head and stared hopefully.

Hiccup shook his head slowly. "Sorry but no. We're going on a little field trip. We can ask if we find him, though. Okay?"

"Okay." I sighed quietly.

\* \* \*

><p>So we were in the academy and filling up our satchels with food, water, whatever else we might need and Hiccup nodded once his was filled up. "Okey-dokie. We'll start on the west islands are work our way back."</p>

"Sure thing." I nodded and was about to get on Toothless's back but I felt someone coming and looked around and saw Astrid.

"Back from where?" She asked. She leapt off Stormfly and walked over to us.

"Uh, uhh... just a quick spin around the island." Hiccup lied. Astrid opened up the satchel.

"Uh-huh. Quick spin, huh?" She pulled the food out. "With enough food to feed Snotlout's whole family?"

"Did I hear my name?" He suddenly asked and quickly walked over to Astrid. "Ooh, do I see a salmon?" He took the fish from Astrid, took a bit and then took a drink from Hiccup's cup.

Astrid gave a scolding look to me and Hiccup that demanded an exclamation.

"If you must know—" Hiccup began.

"And we must." Astrid said. Snotlout was humming happily as he continued to eat at the raw salmon.

"I'm going to do something for my father." Hiccup said. They weren't satisfied still and continued to look at us.

"Trader Johann is bringing something for him, something important." I continued for him. "Johann was supposed to be here by now so we're going out to look for him."

"You're not trading this fish, are you?" Snotlout asked with his mouth full. "'Cause it's delicioius." He moved to take another bite but Hookfang snatched it from his hands and ate it in one bite. "Hey!" Snotlout snapped his fingers.

Hookfang began to hack and and coughed the fish up into Snotlout's hand. The only meat left on the fish was on its head and a bit of its tail. Snotlout began to eat again.

"When do we leave?" Astrid asked.

"It's just going to be Al and I going. If we all disappear, my dad will get suspicious." Hiccup said.

"You guys without us?" Snotlout laughed. "Like you could handle anything if we weren't there to bail you—" He began to choke on the fish in his mouth. He let out choked cries for help. Astrid punched him in the stomach and the fish flew right between Hiccup and I. "Out." He finished weakly.

"Uh, all right. You two can come with us but that's it." He emphasized to make sure they picked up on it. "Don't even tell the others. Heed my warning, I am serious."

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup sat in front of me on Toothless with a pout.</p>

"Hey, Hiccup, Snotlout told us there would be salmon." Tuffnut said.

"I'm pretty sure I said 'don't tell the others'." Hiccup said.

"And I'm pretty sure I didn't listen to you." Snotlout responded.

"And I'm pretty sure that when we get back on Berk, I'll give you a huge basket of butt-whooping until you can't sit right!" I said sharply.

"Aren't you two always saying its better when we work as a team?" Fishlegs asked.

"Next time I say that just slap me in the face." Hiccup said. "Don't slap Al."

"I can slap you right now." Ruffnut rose her hand.

"She will." Tuffnut agreed. "And she slaps like a guy. It's awesome, watch." Ruffnut slapped him. "Yeah."

"So, what do we do if Alyssa says to work as a team?" Fishlegs asked.

"Nothing, she'll fight back and you know she will. Don't you remember, Snotlout, twins, Astrid?" He looked around at all of them. They all looked away except for Astrid, who nodded. "See? It's better to just ignore it."

Normally, I'd respond to this but I didn't this time. I was looking away and off into the distance, hoping to see a black sihouette of a Night Fury roaming through the skies somewhere but of course, nothing was there for me.

"Hey, look!" Astrid pointed.

"I can't see anything through the tears." Tuffnut said.

"I know how that feels." I said and leaned my forehead onto Hiccup's shoulder.

"Is that... Johann?" Hiccup asked.

"I thought he had a bigger boat than that." Snotlout said.

"Come on, gang. Let's check it out." Hiccup said. He swooped down and Toothless scooped Johann up in his talons. We carried him to a nearby island and once he was conscious again, he could barely speak.

"The fog." He whispered. He looked absolutely traumatized. "The fog."

"Johann, where's your ship?" Hiccup asked.

"No idea. All I know is one minute I was sailing in the perfectly calm sea, the wind on my back and the \_next thing I know, my entire ship is pulled out from under me and I'm shark bait!\_" He snapped.

"I don't understand." Hiccup said and handed Johann a fish to eat.

"I do." He responded and took the fish. "I was three days late and trying to make up time and I cut too close."

"Too close to what?" Fishlegs asked shakily.

"Breakneck bog." He answered.

"Breakneck bog." Everyone echoed except for me. I looked around and shrugged.

"Many have sailed into its waters, few have returned." Fishlegs said and quoted from the stories.

"My grandfather told me it's pirates." Astrid said.

"Slade said that it nothing but a land of monstrous nightmares, not the dragon but actual living nightmares. He said that if you are to venture in there and get caught, you'll get the Blood Eagle." I said.

"I remember. I also remember when he told us what the Blood Eagle was." Hiccup gulped audibly.

"Blood Eagle?" Fishlegs asked. "W-W-What's that?"

"Oops." I said. "Uh, you don't... wanna know, trust me."

"It's- " Tuffnut began but I elbowed him roughly. "Ow! My ribs. Do that again."

"No." I shook my head.

Snotlout laughed, "Ridiculous!" He said it as if it was the most

ridiculous thing he'd ever heard. "Everyone knows it's haunted by a fog monster."

"Fog monster?" Fishlegs asked.

"They say the fog monster makes this really creepy moan." Tuffnut said and mocked a creepy moan. "Then he surrounds you and \_scrapes the skin off your bones!\_" Fishlegs cried out. "And then he scrapes the bones off whatever's under those."

"And then, he drops the bones from the sky." Ruffnut said.

"Yes, it's true. What he says; it surrounded me."

"See? Fog monster." Snotlout said. "Pirates and Blood Eagles? Ha! Stupid, old people." I elbowed him as hard as I could in the ribs. "What? You don't even like your dad!"

"It was for Astrid's grandfather." I growled at him then gave a nod to a smirking Astrid.

"Pardon me, Johann but did you happen to see a Night Fury around here?" I asked. I internally begged for him to say yes.

"Sorry, lass but I'm afraid not." He shook his head. I let out a soft sigh and turned my head away; biting at my lip.

"Johann, we have to find your ship. There's something on it for my father." Hiccup said.

"Yes. Yes, there was but it wasn't for your father. It was for you." Johann said. It stumped Hiccup momentarily and it took him a couple of seconds to respond.

"For me?"

"He didn't tell you? It was from your mother."

"My mother." He said in disbelief.

"That's impossible." Astrid said.

"What is it?" Hiccup asked.

"No idea, lad. I just know it's in a chest with a Berk crest on it." He said.

"We've got to find it." I said. I knew more than anyone how precious she was to him.

"Johann, take us back, you show us where you lost your ship." Hiccup said. Johann turned away quickly and began to wail.

"No! No, I won't and you can't make me. I have a knife in my boot!" He cried and the twins chuckled. "I don't have a knife in my boot." He confessed and the twins' faces fell. "But no more fog, please."

"All right, just tell me how I can find Breakneck bog." Hiccup said.

"Head due east, there's a group of islands in the shape of a man's hand, Breakneck bog is the thumb." Johann explained.

"Snotlout, you and the twins take him back to Berk." Hiccup said.

"Back to Berk? With this clown?" Snotlout pointed at Johann. "And those clowns?" He pointed to the twins.

"Look at him, we don't have any choice." I said.

"And if anything happens, you'll be glad you have them with you." Hiccup gestured to the twins. Tuffnut chuckled in Snotlout's direction.

"Question; what are the rest of us doing?" Fishlegs asked.

"We're going to Breakneck Bog." Hiccup said. Fishlegs whimpered uncontrollably.

\* \* \*

><p>We were back to flying over the ocean and towards Breakneck bog. Fishlegs kept trying to weasel his way out of it, especially since Astrid, Hiccup and I explained to him what a Blood Eagle was. "What if I gave you something from my mother? Or I could give you my mother, you know you love her crabcakes."</p>

"The fog." Astrid whispered eerily. "\_The fog.\_"

Fishlegs cried out and Astrid erupted with laughter, I would have laughed if it weren't for the current circumstances. "Tears, Astrid? Is that what you wanna see?" Fishlegs asked with a cracked voice.

"There it is." Hiccup pointed out.

"Breakneck bog." Fishlegs said wearily.

\* \* \*

><p>After an entire checkout of the island, we had the dragons on the ground and were looking around the misty island in disbelief. "I don't get it, we flew all around the island and no boat." Hiccup said.</p>

"Not even the remains of a boat." Astrid said.

"You know who would take a boat?" Fishlegs asked. "A fog monster that'll give us a Blood Eagle and worse."

There was a weird growl that hit our ears and made all of the dragons growl. We soothed them quickly and Astrid asked "What was that?"

"Well, only one way to find out." I said. The dragons all began to walk towards the noise except for Meatlug.

"Hold on, you don't go \_towards\_ the weird, scary sound." Fishlegs

said.

"Yeah, we do. We always do." Astrid said.

"I hate that about us." Fishlegs said quietly.

We walked through the woods with our dragons by our side and looked for anything out of the ordinary. I heard a slight rattle from behind me and saw that Fishlegs had just stepped on a pile of bones. I looked closely at a few rib bones and picked up a broken one.

"Two words: Blood Eagle." I said and put the bone back down.  
"Brutal."

Fishlegs began to whimper. "Bones, that's just perfect."

An anchor almost fell on Astrid but Stormfly pulled her away from it. We looked to where the anchor fell from and there was Johann's ship.

"Wow, Trader Johann's ship." Astrid gasped.

"Wow, he really got off course." Hiccup said.

"I knew it! There's another Red Death around here somewhere! Everyone, brace yourselves for impact!" I ran in circles until Astrid slapped me upside the head when I ran past her to make me stop. I shook my head to clear it up then looked her in the eye, "Thank you." I punched her arm and leapt away so I didn't get hit back.

"See, Fishlegs? You don't slap Al." Hiccup shook his finger at Fishlegs.

"I don't care what you guys think but that's a fog monster." He whimpered and never took his eyes off the ship.

We'd got up there soon after but the dragons refused to land on the ship especially since the boat wouldn't hold them. They kept pulling back, Hiccup went down to land Toothless and he and I got on Stormfly to pick us up since Toothless couldn't fly without Hiccup and he would have fell quite a ways if Hiccup got off in midair.

We got off our dragons and landed in pretty much a pattern. Hiccup jumped off and landed with his legs stretched out a bit, I jumped off and landed the same way but in the opposite direction, Astrid landed the same as Hiccup and after a second or two of waiting, Fishlegs fell flat on his face.

"Okay, guys. Go ahead and get on the ground with Toothless." I said. The dragons obliged.

"Stay where you can hear daddy." Fishlegs called to Meatlug.

"Okay so let's just find this thing and get out of here." Hiccup said. "We're looking for a chest with the Berk crest on it."

A bone suddenly fell from above and landed next to us. We all looked at the sky. "Care to explain that?" Fishlegs asked. Bones began to pour on us wildly.

"Quick, under the deck!" I said and made sure that the others got under before me. I got in after they all had and gathered next to a bunch of baskets. The bones hitting the upper deck continued for only a couple of seconds more and it all suddenly stopped.

"Uh, this is just a little bone shower and it passed." Hiccup said to ease the others.

"Bone shower, so I'm the only one who thinks that's weird?" Fishlegs asked.

"Umm." Astrid rose her hand.

"Okay, it's a little weird." Hiccup shrugged it off. There was a scraping noise and a slight scream that reached all of our ears.

"So is that." Fishlegs said.

"Guys, let's look for this chest already." I said.

"And frankly, that doesn't sound like friendly screaming." Hiccup continued then we both got to looking for the chest. I scanned each and every box that even resembled a chest and searched for a Berk crest anywhere.

Fishlegs suddenly cried out, ran in front of Hiccup and screamed at the top of his lungs. Hiccup showed the chest to him, "Fishlegs, I found it!"

"That's great, Hic." I said.

"Oh, thank Thor." Fishlegs gasped to catch his breath. "There was a hand, no skin, all scraped off."

Then there was a bang against the deck above us and a growl. "It's coming after us!" Astrid shouted.

"Hide!" Hiccup said. We all crammed up in a small room and slammed the doors. We were close together and Hiccup whispered to us in the quietest voice he could. "Nobody... breathe."

I gave him a thumbs up then put an arm around him. I stood in front of him slightly so if whatever it was attacked, it attacked me first and hopefully Hiccup had some chance of getting away.

The door rattled a bit and made us tense. Fishlegs turned and whispered to us all, "I just want you to know, I love you guys." Astrid and I glared at him slightly. The door opened and the others all let out a short scream and I only got extremely defensive but we all calmed when we saw the idiots behind the door.

Tuffnut held a skeleton's arm in his hand, Ruffnut and Snotlout behind him. "Hey guys, need a hand?" He wove the skeleton's hand around. Astrid let out an angered grunt, tackled him and began to beat him with the skeleton's hand.

Ruffnut suddenly took it and began to whack him too.

"All right, all right. Break it up, you guys." Hiccup said.

I couldn't help but to take the arm from Ruffnut and quickly whacked Tuffnut over the head with it.

"OW!"

I felt someone looking at me from behind and turned to see Hiccup. He had a look of annoyance. "What? Astrid and for some reason, Ruffnut got to do it." I shrugged.

He sighed heavily and shook his head. He turned his attention to Snotlout. "So let me guess, this was all you, right? The bones, the scraping."

"Right. And this was all you. 'Ooh! Ahh! Eek!'" Snotlout mocked.

"Actually, most of that was me." Fishlegs confessed.

I still had the arm in my hand and whacked Snotlout over the head.  
"Ow!"

"Remember, Snotlout, this was all me." I said darkly, his eyes widened. I tackled him to the ground and began to bash him with the arm the same way Astrid and Ruffnut did to Tuffnut. I had a word for each time I hit him. "Darn idiot! I'm going to beat you like an egg! I'm going to bury you, dig you up and tie you to a rock and throw you into the bottom of the ocean!"

I felt impact on the top of my head and stopped my attack briefly to turn and see what it was. Hiccup just used to the chest to whack me in the head.

"What's the word I'm looking for? Oh, yeah... Ow!" I rubbed my head with the skeleton's hand. "Why would you do that?"

"Let me handle this." He attempted to push me away with his leg but to no avail. I got up and moved away from Snotlout, arms folded and twisting the skeleton's arm in one of my hands. "Why-Why would you do that? What were you thinking?!"

"That I was going to make you pay for sticking me with Trader Johann!"

"Where is he?"

"Don't worry about him, he's fine." Snotlout said.

"Why do I doubt that?" I asked.

"Just so you know, I'm not going to forget this." Astrid said and punched Snotlout in the stomach. "And what's with that stupid necklace?" She tapped the golden necklace around Snotlout's neck.

"You likey? Yeah, just a little something I found on deck. I can grab one for you, if you want." He said.

The ship began to rock slightly and fell from its place on the tree. We hit the ground roughly and I sat up and slid the chest over to Hiccup since it was no longer in his arms. "Here's your

chest."

"Thanks." He got a hold on it. "Everybody okay?" I nodded but the others were silent and for good reason, there was a hissing or a growling noise outside.

Hiccup shouted and we all huddled together once again. Fog was seeping into the ship.

"Just so you know; this fog, not us." Snotlout said.

"Okay, I'm starting to come around on the fog monster theory." Hiccup said.

### 31. Breakneck Bog Pt 2

\*\*Iron-Mantis: ;)\*\*

\*\*BloodBendingDancer: I'm sure that Alyssa relates, that's why she hits them/insults them (mostly Snotlout) in just about every chapter they have together. I grew a bit accustomed to Ruffnut over the series so I'm kind of okay with her.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>We all squeezed in closer and closer together as more fog seeped into the boat and became very thick. We couldn't see a thing. I felt something begin to pull on my back and I only thought that it was Fishlegs looking for comfort or protection but that didn't last too long since I felt more things clamp down along my back and pull me away from the others.</p>

"Let. Me. Go!" I struggled against whatever was holding me.

"Al, what's going on?" I heard Hiccup ask.

"I have no idea but something's got a hold on me." I growled and broke from whatever had a hold on me but there was something different. I felt lighter and there was not as much weight on my back.

The fog cleared up after a scream came from Fishlegs. He was on Snotlout's back and glaring up at Fishlegs. "Hi." Fishlegs said. With a grunt, Snotlout threw him off.

"We're alive. Right?" Ruffnut said. Tuffnut flicked her, "Ow!" She punched him in the stomach.

"Can we please just get out of here?" Astrid asked.

"Wait, the chest! It's-it's gone! I just had it!" Hiccup looked around for the chest.

"Too bad, so sad. See you back at Berk!" Tuffnut said. Everyone but Astrid, Hiccup and I rushed out and onto their dragons. Hiccup ran up to see what exactly they were doing though it was obvious.

"You guys go on, I have to find that chest." Hiccup said.

"Do what you gotta do. See you when we see you." Snotlout said and the dragons began to walk away.

"Hold on, guys. That chest is from his mom." Astrid said.

"Yeah, touching story. Gotta go." Tuffnut said.

"Put yourself in his shoes."

"Shoe." Snotlout said.

"What if it was your mother?" I asked and watched expectantly as the dragons stopped walking.

"I hate you." Snotlout pointed at me. Tuffnut nodded in agreement.

"I know but do I care?" I asked and mockingly booped his nose. He slapped my hand away with an angered grunt.

"And this does not mean we're really friends." Snotlout told Hiccup.

Hiccup smiled brightly at all of us. "Thank you guys. I mean it." I patted his shoulder with a grin.

"Come on, bud. We've got a chest to find and no time to waste." I said and turned around to get on Toothless.

"Uh, Al?" Astrid asked.

"Yeah?" I turned and looked at her.

"Could you... turn around again?" She asked.

"Sure thing." I spun back around for her to see my back. "Why? What's wrong?"

"Well, first off; you're sword is gone." She said.

"Secondly, there's cuts on your back from where it was." Hiccup added.

"There is?" I tried to somehow turn my head around to see but I was still unable to see any cuts. "How bad? I didn't even feel 'em."

"There aren't that bad." Hiccup said. "There's quite a few but they're small so they don't look too deadly."

"Unless there was a poison that was subjected into my body and \_that's\_ why I didn't feel any pain." I said then my eyes widened suddenly. "Wait, you said that my sword is gone? I can't lose it. Gobber gave it to me."

I looked around for this fog monster and let out an angered growl. "This is getting really frustrating. Why is everything so hard?! I'm going and taking my sword back."

After a while of flying, we began to go through thicker and thicker

mist around the island. We looked for any sign of the thick, dark fog anywhere and Astrid was the first one to spot it.

"There it is!" She called out and pointed.

The fog was moving in a strange manner. Quick and streamlined.

"Is it just me or does fog not move like that at all?" I asked. Hiccup nodded. We gained up on the fog but it split in two and went separate ways.

Hiccup pointed towards the one that moved to our right, "Astrid!"

"On it!" She said. Her, Snotlout and the twins took off after it. Fishlegs and I stayed with Hiccup.

We chased after it for a bit but when I saw that the fog was gaining speed, it disappeared over a cliff. We had rejoined Astrid and the others and realized that they must not have got it either.

"We lost it." Hiccup said.

"So did we." Astrid said.

We got off the dragons and I stretched out a bit, not minding much else.

"Uh, it didn't lose us." Tuffnut said. I looked over and saw the fog heading our way, my eyes narrowed slightly and I sighed.

"Yes, that would be just perfect." I said. "Fog monsters and whatnot, that's just perfect."

The smoke surrounded all of us in a ring, the dragons all began to growl. "Settle down, bud." Hiccup told Toothless. The dragons suddenly began to fly in the air.

"What are they doing?" Ruffnut asked.

"They're leaving us." Tuffnut said.

"I knew Hookfang never liked me." Snotlout said.

The dragons weren't heading anywhere, though. They were flying in place. I looked around and saw the smoke clearing. I saw Hiccup through the corner of my eye and nudged him with my elbow gently. Hiccup nodded, "They aren't going anywhere. Look."

Where the fog once was had been replaced by dragons. Many small ones that were about Terrible Terror-sized.

"They're dragons." Astrid said.

"Yeah, angry ones." Snotlout said.

"Look on the bright side, Fishlegs; there is no fog monster." Hiccup said.

"I feel so much better." Fishlegs said.

"I can tell." I sighed.

"What are those things?" Ruffnut asked.

"They're like smoky dragon pirates without eye patches." Tuffnut said.

"Smothering Smokebreath dragons." Fishlegs said.

"Oh, of course!" I slapped myself in the forehead. "How come I didn't see it sooner?"

"You mean you knew about these things?" Snotlout asked.

"We read about them but we didn't think they actually existed." Fishlegs said.

"Correction; you didn't believe they actually existed. I did." I said.

"That's because you're as gullible as a sack of potatoes." Snotlout commented.

"I'm going to—" I stepped forth but Hiccup pulled me back by the sleeve. I pulled back and growled in my throat.

"Guys, can we please talk about this later? What else did the book say?" Hiccup asked.

"They hide themselves in a veil of smoke..." I began.

"Very territorial..." Fishlegs said. "And, uhhh... I forgot the third thing."

They looked at me. I shrugged. "I'm drawing a blank on it, too."

The dragons suddenly began to dive for us, most of us fighting back, not counting me. A few Smokebreaths were pulling on Tuffnut while the other side was being pulled by Barf and Belch. When we realized how badly we were outnumbered, we had to pull back.

"We have to fall back!" Hiccup said.

"Uh, fall back where?" Tuffnut asked.

"Give us a fireline." Hiccup ordered.

"Don't have to ask us twice." He said. Barf and Belch almost immediately cleared the area and we went up to slightly higher ground to observe.

"What are we doing? Why are we still here?" Fishlegs asked.

"I'm not leaving without that chest." Hiccup said.

"You don't even know if they have it!" Snotlout snapped.

We saw a group of Smokebreaths carrying the anchor from Johann's ship into a nearby cavern. I looked towards Hiccup expectantly. "I have a

pretty good idea. Let's get a closer look." He said.

We were off the dragons and hiding behind a large dirt mound as a few Smothering Smokebreaths zipped into the cavern.

"Guys, anything more you'd like to share?" Hiccup asked.

"Third thing; the Smothering Smokebreaths make their nest out of metallic objects." Fishlegs said.

"Doesn't sound too cozy... or does it?" Tuffnut said.

"It's not supposed to be, they do it to defend against attacks by bigger dragons." I said.

"I wish I could see in there." Hiccup said.

"Yeah, you do." Tuffnut chuckled. He was examining his hand through a spyglass.

"Where did you get that?" Hiccup asked.

"From the ship or whatever that was in the tree." He replied. Hiccup took the spyglass from him and growled. I know, it shocked me a bit too. He inspected the inside of the cave.

"They're melding them all together. Al, I can see your sword. It's right behind the chest. Wait. The chest! It's in there! Now we've got to get them away from that pile of loot." Hiccup said.

"Maybe we can lure them out." Astrid suggested.

"With what?" Hiccup asked. We all looked at Snotlout who was polishing his golden necklace.

"Shiny." He suddenly looked up at us and smiled innocently. He was completely unaware of what was going on and gave a small laugh.  
"What?"

"The look on your face almost makes me feel about doing this.  
Almost." I said. His eyes widened.

The next thing he knew is that he was standing on a high rock and calling out for the dragons, "Here, dragons. Got something for you. Over here, come get it."

I could hear the dragon's growls from the inside of their cave then faintly heard Snotlout say, "I'm going to make Hiccup \_eat\_ that chest. Ow!" He cried when a rock hit the side of his helmet and rattled him a bit, he glared down at me.

I whislted nonchalantly and when the dragons began to pour out of their nesting area, we dashed in. Hiccup hurried off Toothless's back and onto the pile of metal to retrieve the chest, the small dragons were already coming back.

I quickly ran off and grabbed for the sword and fastened it back over my shoulder with a pleased shift.

"Uh, guys? They're coming." Fishlegs warned.

"Hiccup, hurry up!" Astrid ordered.

The dragons began to creep towards Hiccup, "Come on, Toothless." I said. The Night Fury leapt on top of the metal pile behind Hiccup and growled. He flapped his wings to clear the smoke and Hiccup climbed onto his back once again. We began to fly out of the cave but heard a plea.

"Don't leave me!" It was Snotlout.

"Toothless, plasma blast." Hiccup ordered. Toothless turned around and fired at the dragons that tried to meld Snotlout to the pile since he was wearing the necklace once again. He broke free with the necklace intact.

He stood and cheered, "Oh, yeah!" He got on Toothless behind me and we were able to leave the cave. They were hot on our tail and kept snapping their jaws next to Snotlout to retrieve the necklace.

"Snotlout, would you leave the necklace?" Hiccup asked.

"No, it's my shiny!" He answered childishly.

"Well, it's you or 'your shiny'." I said. He looked like he'd put some serious thought into this and finally tossed the necklace back then called for Hookfang, who picked him up and threw him into the air and caught him on his neck.

"Anything you have that's metal, throw it at them!" Astrid said.

Everyone began to toss whatever metal items they had. I wasn't leaving this sword, it's a cherished gift. Hiccup threw his knife and the way it spun almost cut my in the side of the face and made me jump back an inch or two. Fishlegs was completely unloading all of his maces.

"We did it!" Snotlout shouted victoriously.

"Hiccup!" Astrid called.

Hiccup was suddenly pulled down by one last Smothering Smokebreath. Toothless's tail closed because Hiccup's foot was no longer in it. I shifted to the saddle and hooked my foot in to save us from the fall and flicked the tail out. Before I could reach over to pull Hiccup up and the dragon off of him, Fishlegs and Meatlug beat me to it and threw Hiccup up into my arms.

"Whoa!" I called out. Hiccup panted slightly but grinned at the chest in his arms. "I'm glad that's over. You alright, Hic?"

He nodded.

"You will not haunt my dreams! Because I'll never sleep again." Fishlegs said bravely at first but cowered on the last part.

\* \* \*

><p>After getting home and dropping off Johann's boat, Hiccup, Toothless, Stoic and I were standing around the chest. It was like some big mystery was about to be solved.</p>

"Go ahead, open it." Stoic told Hiccup.

Hiccup was very hesitant and slowly went to open up the chest. His mouth gaped slightly at what was inside, a little stuffed dragon.

"I remember this." Hiccup gasped.

"Aye, you should. Your mother made that for you when you were just a baby. Scared you half to death, didn't sleep for a week." Stoic said.

"What? I was afraid of dragons?" Hiccup asked.

"Yep." I nodded. "Terrified."

"One day, we were out fishing and you threw that thing into the sea." Stoic chuckled.

"How'd you find it?" Hiccup asked.

"It showed up in a fishing net, Trader Johann got it in trade and contacted me." He explained.

I gave a loving yet sad gaze toward Hiccup, Toothless looked carefully at the stuffed dragon and Hiccup with a sad gaze.

"I was so little when mom... you know." Hiccup said. I felt tears brim my eyes. "I was starting to get afraid that I'd forget her but now, I love it." He held the stuffed dragon close. I dabbed the corners of my eyes with my fingers.

"Oh, Hiccup. It would make your mother very, very happy to finally hear that." Stoic said.

I put a gentle yet firm hold on Hiccup's shoulder with an affectionate shake and hug. I gave a heavy sigh and kept a grin on my face as I looked towards my dear friend, he looked at me and returned the grin.

It was one of those moments when you don't need words to communicate, because you can feel how much a person cares for you just by looking at them.

### 32. Gem of a Different Color

\*\*Iron-Mantis: Thank you. :)\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Hey, Gobber, could you lend a hand?" I asked and approached his place of work. He just finished working on the mouth of a Deadly Nadder then looked at me. Hiccup was by my side and was curious as to why I wasn't telling him I needed to see Gobber.</p>

"I don't appreciate those jokes, Aly and you know it." He pointed a

finger at me.

"Okay, could you help me then?" I asked him; correcting my choice of words while doing so. "I'm thinking of doing these combat trainings and I would like you to be the referee and/or trainer. I would truly appreciate it if you could help."

"What? Why?" Hiccup asked.

I turned to speak to him, "Well, Hiccup, while I try to protect you, there will be times that we will be separated. So it would put both me and your father at ease if you know how to fight."

"So in other words, you're just going to let Astrid?" He said.

"Pretty much." I nodded with a shrug. "So Gobber, what do you say?"

\* \* \*

><p>Ruffnut and Tuffnut circled each other in the academy for the training that I'd suggested to Gobber.</p>

Ruffnut was the first to attack, per usual and began to hit Tuffnut's shield with her own. After a few powerful swings, she was able to knock him on his back and send the shield he held flying out of his hand.

"As I've said a million times, and Ruffnut has demonstrated so splendidly; the shield can be your most important weapon." Gobber said and held the shield up in his hand. "Who's next?"

"Hold on, I don't get to hit her back?" Tuffnut got up and asked.

"On your own time." Gobber responded. "Hiccup, Astrid."

"I-I don't think it's really fair for me to be fighting a—" Hiccup began but one of Astrid's legs flew by and almost kicked him in the face. She swung a punch that he dodged and then he flipped her over his shoulder. Gobber walked over to Hiccup who was now pinned to the ground by Astrid.

"In a situation like this, it's best to remain calm and take deep breaths." Gobber said. Hiccup tried but that didn't work. "When that's not an option, I'd advise playing dead."

Hiccup fell to the ground immediately. "Just like that. Good job, Hiccup. Good form, Astrid." I knelt and then I lifted Hiccup to his feet, "You okay?"

"Never better." He said weakly. "My shoulder should pop back into place in no time." I felt both of his shoulders the best I could.

"Oh, gods, here we go." He sighed. I gripped his right arm and slid it upwards. "Ow! Why would you do that?"

"Hey, it helped, didn't it?" I asked.

He rolled his arm around. "Yeah, I guess. Thanks."

"Snotlout, Fishlegs; let's see what you've got." Gobber said.

"Whoo! I think we all know what I've got! Snotlout, Snotlout! Oy, oy, oy!"

"Fishlegs, don't be shy." Gobber called. "Vikings can't rely on dragons alone to protect them."

But when Fishlegs didn't appear, Gobber asked the rest of us "Thoughts on Fishlegs' whereabouts? Anyone?" We just looked around in confusion as to where he could be.

\* \* \*

><p>"I'm starting to get a little worried about Fishlegs." Astrid said that night. "Do you think he's okay?"</p>

"He looks okay to me." Ruffnut said.

"Is Fishlegs glowing?" Tuffnut asked.

"Actually, I think he is." Hiccup said in slight astonishment.

"Not for long." Snotlout cracked his knuckles. I rolled my eyes with a sigh and folded my arms.

"Fishlegs, where were you this afternoon?" I asked.

"You missed hand-to-face combat." Snotlout said. "My hand to your face!"

"I prefer to use the part of my body \_above \_the neck." Fishlegs responded.

"What neck?" Snotlout asked with a smirk.

"You want another beating?" I growled. "Let's not forget how irritable I've been lately so I suggest that you really start calming your attitude down and soon because I'm not going to be sitting back for much longer."

"No, it's fine, Alyssa. But I refuse to encourage your violent tendencies, Snotlout." Fishlegs said. I wasn't easing up, though.

"Don't knock it till you try it." Snotlout said.

"It's true." I said and elbowed him in the ribs. "See?" He punched me in the shoulder. I used a leg to sweep his out from under him and he fell to the ground. I leapt away before he could pull me down too.

"Al, you had your go at him earlier." Hiccup said. "Leave him be."

"He's glowing again." Ruffnut whispered about Fishlegs.

"I know. \_Spooky\_." Tuffnut responded.

"It's not me that's glowing." Fishlegs said. He reached into his satchel and pulled out a small glowing rock that shone in different colors and there was something about it. "It's this."

"What is it?" Hiccup asked.

We ended up having to go into the great hall to get our answer since that's where Gobber was and since he used to travel, it was best to go and check with him about what this may have been. While doing so, Fishlegs had attracted the attention of the entire village and I'm not exaggerating. It literally was \_the entire village\_, with the exception of Mildew.

Speaking of which, he's been gone a lot lately. I'm not complaining, though. Just seems a bit weird to me. Right now he should coincidentally show up in the village and cause a big commotion. What evil scheme is he up to this time? If he did something to Shadow, I swear I'm going to go beat him like an egg. Maybe even worse.

"It's a stone of good fortune." Gobber informed us all. "My great uncle's wife's brother told me about its powers."

"I thought he was mute." Mulch said.

"Until he found the stone, and then we couldn't shut him up." Gobber said. "This stone brings good luck to whomever comes in contact with it."

Vikings immediately began to shout at Fishlegs, begging for a trade or a handout. They had him surrounded and were fighting to get to him, thank goodness that Stoic came in when he did.

"Enough, everyone! Stand back." He ordered. They all silenced then backed away as he approached. "Who found this?"

"Uh, right here, chief." Fishlegs rose his hand from the ground.

"It's a stone of good fortune." Gobber said and helped him up with his good hand. The Vikings began to shout trades for it again.

"Please, my baby! She needs good fortune." One mother called. Tuffnut walked over and inspected the baby.

"Ugh! That's a baby?! I thought it was a bundle of sticks wrapped in bacon." He said and backed away with disgust.

"Nevermind Tuffnut." Stoic told the mother and the others.

"Three yaks for the stone! Four chickens!" A Viking shouted.

"Twenty sheep and my first born, Gustov." A woman said and held up her son. Gustov looked at her in disbelief and shock.

"Me? Huh?"

"Listen to me!" Stoic shouted. "This belongs to Fishlegs, and what he

does with it is up to him."

Trades were shouted once again and I patted Fishlegs' shoulder.  
"Let's get you out of here. It's not safe." Fishlegs began to walk off with me, Hiccup and the other teens following along.

We got outside and Fishlegs was looking down at the stone sadly. Snotlout was being very insensitve but that's no shocker.

"Twenty sheep and Gustov Larson?! You're turning that down? Come on! What do you want for it?" He asked.

"You can't have it, Snotlout. Not for any price." Fishlegs said and held the stone closely.

"Oh, I think I can. You seem to forget, when Snotlout wants something, he just takes it!" He said.

"How badly do you really want it, Snotlout?" Astrid stepped forward.

He looked frightened for a moment then scoffed. "You're lucky I don't hit girls. That thing doesn't count." He pointed at me.

"You're lucky I don't hit girls either." Astrid said. They all began to walk away except I stood on the steps and glared at Snotlout. He noticed and scowled at me.

"What do you want?" He snapped.

"Touch that stone and your going to wake up the next morning dangling over a cliff by your feet over Cauldron-infested waters covered in blue oleander. So I dare you to try me.." I warned darkly while staying calm all the while.

He opened his mouth to retort but I heard Hiccup's voice call out.

"Al, what are you doing? Come on!" I looked around to see if I could check where his voice came from then leapt down and rushed to see where he could have been and he was just around the corner of one of the houses. "Come on, we're going on a trip."

"Anything to get away from here." I said.

\* \* \*

><p>"You sure you want to do this, Fishlegs?" Hiccup asked.</p>

Astrid, Fishlegs, Hiccup and I were flying back to where he'd found this 'stone' so he could put it back.

"It's too much stress. You saw that mob, they ran right over me!" He said.

"Like a sack of flower!" Astrid said.

"I just want to put this thing back where I found it and never think about it again. 'Stone of good fortune.' Yeah, right." He

scoffed.

The dragons had suddenly taken it upon themselves to fly in their own direction, Toothless growled and we were pretty aware that something bad was going to happen. "They sense something." Hiccup said what we were all thinking.

"Um, didn't you say that you found it burried in the sand?" I asked as we neared trees that had the same kind of stones that Fishlegs had found.

"I did." He responded.

"Then what are those?" I asked but on further inspection, these stones were in nests and bundled together. Not just any nests... dragon nests. "Hiccup, these things are eggs!" I shook him from behind.

"Okay, stop shaking me!" His voice vibrated as he spoke then he shrugged me off a bit. I stopped shaking him and looked to Fishlegs who slapped a hand to his forehead.

"Dragon eggs! How did I miss that?" He said. "The egg I dug up must have fallen out and gotten buried. I can't believe I almost kept this baby from its mother."

"But you didn't." I said.

"Now, let's put this egg back and get out of here." Hiccup said. Fishlegs flew to the nearest nest and Toothless growled. "The mothers must be close."

Stormfly growled and her tail spines stood on end, "Yeah, really close!" Astrid said. "Fishlegs, say goodbye and let's go!"

"Okay, okay, okay." He said. "Goodbye, little color-changing dragon egg." He put it up in the nest and we had begun to fly away but there was the sound of trees toppling behind us.

I looked back and said, "They're after us."

"Yeah but where are they?" Astrid asked.

"I don't see anything back there!" Fishlegs said.

There was a dragon's growl and acid flew past us.

"Whoa! Whatever it is, it's shooting acid at us." Hiccup said.

"An invisible, acid-shooting dragon? Great!" Fishlegs said.

I thought about it briefly then it came to me in a flash. I called out for the others to hear, "Guys, it's a Changewing!"

"Changewing?" Hiccup asked.

"Let's get out of here before I explain further." I said.

We escaped the forest not a moment later and as we flew back, they turned to look at me while panting. "So you said it's a Changewing?"

Hiccup asked.

"Yep." I nodded. "It sprays a hot-burning acid, can change the color of its skin to blend with its surroundings."

"Do you know anything about the eggs?" Astrid asked.

"Not a thing. When we get back, we might have to check the Book of Dragons." I said. "Well, what I do know now is that they are mistaken for stones of good fortune."

"Actually, it's been a really long night for me. Can we meet back up on this tomorrow?" Fishlegs asked. I stared at him a bit sympathetically and nodded.

"Yeah, it can wait till tomorrow." I said.

\* \* \*

><p>"Huh?" I asked when I saw the Changewing page.</p>

"What is it, Al? Something wrong?" Hiccup asked.

"Not really." I shook my head. "Just so you know, in case you've forgotten from the last time you read the book, 'even baby dragons can shoot acid.'" I informed.

"You mean that it says something about the babies? So, there's got to be something about the eggs, right?" Fishlegs asked and peeked over my shoulder.

"No, nothing." I looked up at him.

"Well, where are the drawings, at least?" Hiccup asked.

"Well, that's why I had gotten confused. There are none. But I know for fact that the last time I saw the Changewing page, there was a Changewing on it." I said.

"I would say 'Can't draw what you can't see' but instead, I'll say this; Al, you wanna know what I think?" Hiccup said.

"No." I responded.

"Huh? Why?" He asked.

"Because I already know what you're going to say. You'll say 'I think you're insane.'" I mimicked his voice. "Then I reply 'Hiccup, you always say that.' Then you say 'I know.'"

"I know." He said and looked back down at the book with a sneaky grin.

"Hiccup, shut up." She said.

"The Changewing eggs... they didn't look like dragon eggs, right?" Fishlegs asked a bit desperately. "If I had seen that, you know that I'd never have gone and stolen it."

"Fishlegs, calm down. None of us do." Hiccup said.

"I should've known." Fishlegs said.

"All I know is, it's a good thing we brought that egg back. Who knows what they'd do if the eggs were still on Berk?" Hiccup asked. As if on queue, Tuffnut and Ruffnut walked inside, Tuffnut held a Changewing egg in his hand.

"You just had to ask." I said.

Hiccup glared at me momentarily then looked at the twins, "Uh, what's that?" He asked though he really didn't want to know the answer.

"Uh, I don't know, maybe a lifetime of good luck." Tuffnut said, headbutted Ruffnut and knocked her flat on her back. He began to dance and hum a bit.

"I'll take that." I stepped forward with an outstretched arm.

"Over my dead body." He responded and took off running.

"Where did you even get that?" Astrid shouted after him, Ruffnut now folling her brother.

"Traded for it!" She said.

"Traded with who?" Hiccup called but they were gone.

"Why do I have a feeling it's-"

\* \* \*

><p>"Snotlout!" I shouted and saw him jump a bit.</p>

"Snotlout, what are you doing?" Hiccup asked.

"What does it look like I'm doing? I'm getting rich!" He said. There were weapons, animals and Gustav Larson standing around him.

"But you can't." Fishlegs said.

"But I did. Gems are gone." He said.

"Gone." Gustav echoed with a smirk he probably picked up from Snotlout.

"They aren't gems, you meathead." I glared at Snotlout.

"And they certainly don't bring good luck." Hiccup said.

"Puh-lease. They're bringing me luck. I'm up to my neck in weapons and livestock." He bragged.

"Snotlout, those are dragon eggs." Astrid said.

"Changewings to be exact." Fishlegs added.

"Changewings, schmang- I don't care what they are! All I know is, I'm rich and you're not."

"We're rich and you're not." Gustav echoed.

"Snotlout, listen to me, we need to get those eggs off Berk before something really bad happens." Hiccup said.

"Yeah, you don't want to separate a dragon mother from her egg. Especially one you can't see that shoots burning acid." Fishlegs said.

"Really? You did." Snotlout pointed accusingly.

"That was an accident!" Fishlegs defended with a look of shock on his face.

"Accident, on purpose. Rich, poor. Who cares? They're gone and I have a no return policy. Tell 'em Gustav." Snotlout said.

"No returns." Gustav said and pushed away a few weapons.

"Heh, if you want them, you'll have to take it up with my customers." Snotlout walked away with a yak and wheelbarrel full of weapons.

Fishlegs shook his head and turned his back from us, "Oh, it's all my fault."

"Fishlegs, it isn't your fault." Hiccup said.

"Yes, it is. If I hadn't gone to that island and brought that egg back then Snotlout wouldn't have known where to go get them and we wouldn't be in danger of imminent attack by angry mother Changewings." Fishlegs said.

"When you put it that way, it really is his fault." Astrid said.

Hiccup and I glared at her.

"Just saying." She shrugged with a smirk.

"I'm going to kick the crap out of Snotlout's overgrown meathead." I said and began to walk away from the area but a hand gripped the back of my tunic and tossed me on the ground. "Astrid, why?"

"I want to beat him up too but we have more important matters at hand, like the eggs." She suggested.

I got off the ground quickly and scrambled to begin to run off. "I'll save you, dragon chicks!"

Once again, pulled to the ground. "Would you quit that?!" I snapped.

"No, I'm just having fun now." She folded her arms. I ground my teeth together and punched her in the shin before scrambling back to my feet. She gave a firm kick to my behind.

"For the love of Thor, Astrid!" I rubbed myself gently.

"Girls, quit it. We're going to get the eggs." Hiccup said.

\* \* \*

><p>Tuffnut was dropped in front of us on the ground from Stormfly's talons and he stood up. Hiccup was the one to inform the twins, "Guys, that not a good luck stone. It's a dragon egg and it's mother is a dangerous dragon that blends in with just about anything and spits hot, burning acid and destroys whatever's in its path."</p>

The twins took a bit of time to think this over, "Okay, so, like a tree, for example, were spitting acid and melting everything in sight-"

"You're saying that it would be one of these dragons?" Ruffnut finished.

"Wow, they got it on the first try." Astrid said.

"We're not stupid." Ruffnut said.

"At least I'm not. Besides, there's one right there." Tuffnut pointed behind us. We looked back to see trees falling over then on a nearby tree, there was a dark distortion in a dragon shape that climbed down a tree. Toothless growled.

"Whoa, a Changewing." Astrid gasped.

"What do you know? He was telling the truth." I shrugged.

It leapt from the tree to a rock and Hiccup gaped. "It's amazing, it really does blend in."

"Hiccup, Alyssa, quick! Train it so we can keep it and spit acid at Ruffnut." Tuffnut said. Ruffnut angrily shoved him to the side and this ended up angering the Changewing and it spat acid at her, hitting the rocks next to her. It began to spit at the rest of us but luckily, we were able to dodge the attacks.

About two more appeared from the trees, Tuffnut stood up bravely and held the egg high. "Ha, nice try but as you can see, I am holding the stone-" A Changewing picked him up and shook him fiercely, the egg went flying out of his hand. When it did, the dragon tossed Tuffnut aside like an empty sack of flour and flew to the egg, catching it in its mouth and flew away.

"Did you see that?" Hiccup asked.

"At least they're gone." Astrid said.

"I highly doubt that." I said to her.

"Agreed, those Changewings worked together to save that one egg." Fishlegs said.

"Wait, are you saying what I think you're saying?" She asked.

"Oh, \_ that's \_what he said! Wait, what did he say?" Tuffnut said.

"Afraid so." I nodded gravely. "None of the Changewings will leave until they get all of their eggs back. They will destroy Berk until they are able to find every last one."

\* \* \*

><p>"So what you're tellin' me is that our village is about to be under seige by wild dragons we can't see?" Stoic asked after we explained the whole deal to him.</p>

"Oh, don't forget the hot, burning acid." Tuffnut added. The rest of us glared at him, "What? It was awesome."

"Well, grab your dragons then. We'll fight 'em off." Stoic said.

"Dad, I wish it were that easy but they won't go away until they get what they want." Hiccup said.

"Come on, they're just wanting their babies back safe in their nests, isn't that enough for anyone to ask for? For their loved ones to be safe?" I asked.

"Oh, it's all my fault." Fishlegs rubbed his forehead with his hand.

Gobber suddenly barged in, "Stoic, I just realized something! It's not a stone of good fortune, it's a Changewing egg! I always get those two confused." We didn't show much response to this.

"Hiccup, what are you suggesting we do?" Stoic asked.

"I think we should get everyone off the island until we can get the eggs back with their mothers and the Changewings are gone. Hopefully it's not too late." Hiccup said.

"Of all the years I've been chief, we've never turned in fear of anything. I'm not about to start." He said.

Right after, there was a scream that we all heard and rushed outside to see the source of. There was a Changewing storming around, it had torn down an entire wall to a house and attacked a few Vikings already and burned a door down with its acid.

Stoic lifted up a giant wooden pillar and chased it to a boulder where it blended in. He looked around for it briefly then asked "Where did it go?"

"That would be the 'blending-in-can't-see-it-at-all' bit." Hiccup said.

"Hey, I got this chief." Tuffnut said and walked up to the ordinary stone. The Changewing had already left but he was oblivious to that fact. He spoke slowly, "Stay dragon, I am now your master." He placed his hand on the stone then turned to us with the cheesiest thumbs up possible though nothing was happening.

"It's gone, isn't it?" Stoic said, deadpanned.

"Oh, long gone." Hiccup said, just as deadpanned.

There was more screaming coming from the village. Stoic turned back to us, "You and the others find those eggs, we'll handle the Changewings."

"Please don't be too aggressive with them." I begged then followed Hiccup away to find those eggs.

We searched for a while but after not seeing anyone with a shining egg in their pocket, we flew off with Astrid and found Fishlegs. There was a Changewing about to attack but Stormfly's tail spines fired and protected them from the wild dragon.

The baby that was in a wheelbarrel flew out and into the air, thankfully, Fishlegs caught it and took a look at it. "Meatlug, look at the baby." He said and lowered the baby for Meatlug to see. Simply put, she blew lava out of her mouth like she had vomitted. "Baby? Oh, maybe Tuffnut was right."

So after returning the baby, we went out to stop the boats from evacuation. "Dad, stop the evacuation! We got them all, the Changewings are gone."

"Well, how do you explain that?" Gobber pointed to Changewings that were along one of the bridges and watching the boats.

"Oh, no. There are four of them." Hiccup said.

"But there were only three eggs." Fishlegs said.

"They're going for the ship." Astrid said.

"What do they want with-"

"It's not the ship. It's what's on it. Another egg." He glared down at Snotlout. "Can you guys keep the Changewings at bay?"

"What are you gonna do?" Hiccup asked.

"Something I should've done a long time ago." He said.

"I'm going with you." I said. "He's really been pushing it ever since we were on Outcast Island and why not get a little revenge?" I leapt off Toothless and got on Meatlug the best I could. "Shall we?" I smirked.

"Yes, we shall." He said. Meatlug flew to the ship and we appeared behind Snotlout. "Going somewhere, Snotlout?"

"Who's asking?" He asked.

"Who's askin'?" Gustav echoed.

"Go find your mother, Gustav." Fishlegs said.

The boy looked at Snotlout slowly, sighed and ran off the ship. Snotlout had gotten really irritated with that. "I can't believe you, I was really starting to like that kid."

I folded my arms and glared him down while I let Fishlegs do the

talking, "Give it to me, Snotlout."

"Heh, finally." He pounded a fist into his palm.

"You know what I mean. Where's the egg?"

"None of your business. Aww, what are you gonna do, Fishlegs?" Snotlout mocked. I caught a glimpse of Fishlegs through the corner of my eye and for the first time in my life, I can say that I had the crap completely scared out of me and I know for a fact that I had paled.

Fishlegs let out a wordless scream and threw the wheelbarrow of weapons aside. Snotlout ran away and hid behind me.

"What the heck are you doing? Get off me!" I shook him away from me.

Fishlegs shouted wordlessly still as he dug through Snotlout's belongings then turned back to Snotlout. "Now, you listen, you can do whatever you want to me, you can threaten me, make fun of me, mock my incredible dragon knowledge but what you will not do is stand between a baby dragon and his mother. Do you understand me, Snotlout?"

Snotlout, like I was, looked scared out of his wits.

"It's always the quiet ones that snap the loudest." Bucket said.

"I'd give it to him, Snotlout. There's no telling what he's capable of." Mulch added in.

There was reattling around, we looked over at Meatlug that was shifting around a bunch of weapons and sniffing about. Fishlegs praised her, "That's it. Find it, girl."

Meatlug swiped a basket onto its side and revealed a Changewing egg. "Oh, what do you know? I think I'll just take that." He picked the egg up. "Any objections, Snotlout?"

No response.

"Didn't think so. Alyssa, didn't you have something to..." He pounded a fist into his palm. "Say to him?"

Then I remembered how angry I was at Snotlout and turned to him with a harsh glare. "Now, if you excuse me, I have a date with destiny." Fishlegs finished and flew off on Meatlug.

I approached Snotlout darkly with a terrible aura surrounding me. I had been glaring him down the whole time and when I was mere inches in front of him.

I tightened my fists up, his eyes shut completely; clenching tightly and he turned his head away like it would somehow help his current situation. I turned his face towards me with a growl, "What did I say would happen if you touched those eggs?"

He looked around then gulped, he either didn't remember or didn't

remember.

"I told you that you'd suffer the punishments. Fishlegs gave it to you pretty good, I'll say that much so I won't make this last much longer. Maybe a few more punches oughtta do." I said darkly, Snotlout jumped out of the boat. "That works too." I smirked.

So after that, I left the docks and wandered through the empty plaza to the Haddock household but when I made it to the door, I stopped in my tracks since I heard a Night Fury growl and there was something that sparked inside of me wildly. I had to look and see what it was but my excitement was short-lived. It had only been Toothless. Hiccup was riding him over the village.

I looked away and bit my lip to keep the tears held back.

"Shadow, where are you?" I asked quietly. I looked up at the moon and wondered to myself on where he could have been.

I let out a sigh and walked inside of the chief's home. There was no comforting and lovable purr and nudge to soothe me after all of this. No loving tackle, no adoring eyes, nothing. The house was quiet.

I suddenly hadn't cared for anything and sat on the ground near the cold and empty fireplace. I stared at it as if I waited to magically start a fire but after sitting in the dark for a few minutes, I began to throw fresh wood in the fireplace and start up a fire.

I sat back once again and stared into the dancing flames intently. The way they moved was graceful and the smell of smoke was thick as it should be. I watched smoke fly to the ceiling, flames dance and crackle. I was only hoping to lean back and hit a black, leathery hide to rest upon and pet lovingly but instead I flopped down on my back.

I stared up at the ceiling tiredly with my vision beginning to blur. I felt a stinging in my eyes and rubbed at them furiously, I wasn't about to cry. Shadow wouldn't want me to cry. He'd want me to be myself but that was hard for me to do since Shadow had become most of my life over the period of time that we'd been together and I had no idea where he was.

The door opened and I glanced over to see Hiccup and Toothless. Hiccup saw me lying on the ground, "Al, is there something wrong?" I stared up at him blankly. "It'll be okay, we'll find him. I promise."

My only response was to sigh then I rose a brow when he knelt down and patted one of my hands and stared into my eyes, "Sweet dreams, Al."

"Sweet dreams, Hic." I sighed quietly.

I was exhausted but not sleepy. I was going to get sleep tonight, though. Even if I had to cry my way there.

### 33. We Are Family Pt 1

\*\*snake screamer: Thank you. We'll have to read on to find

out.\*\*

\*\*Iron-Mantis: No problem. I love your suggestions.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Hey, Sven. Happy Bork week." I waved to the Viking working with a couple of Nadders.</p>

"Ah, Alyssa. Happy Bork week." He waved back after looking up from his work.

Bork Week has got to be one of my favorite holidays, or holiweeks, next to Snoggletog and I forget the other one. Oh, well. I can dwell on that later. I was really hoping that Shadow could be here during Bork Week, he would enjoy flying in this parade that we're having for the dragons.

I could tell him the history of Bork the Bold, creator of the Book of Dragons and he would listen intently but he's somewhere else. I really wish that I find him soon, though. It's already been long enough.

"Aly, happy Bork week." Gobber waved his hook hand at me. I smiled up and waved back.

"Happy Bork week, Gobber." I said then bumped into someone quite a bit smaller than me. I looked down, "Hey, Hic. I missed you this morning, happy Bork week." I patted his head; ruffling his hair a bit.

He pulled back and used his hands to smoothe his hair down again, "Yep. Happy Bork Week, Al. How are your dragon calls doing?" He asked suddenly.

"Fine. I'm probably a bit rusty, though. Why?" I asked with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Can you do a Night Fury?" He asked.

"At least challenge me." I said. I turned my head a bit skywards and there was a soft grumble in the back of my throat then a roar. I shut my mouth and licked my lips, "Or do you want the divebomb?"

I made the screeching or whistling noise that you hear right before a Night Fury delivers a devastating blast of their bright fire. I saw many of the villagers duck down in fear then quickly shut my mouth. Hiccup shook his head.

"Al, the first one was fine. You might not want to do that Night Fury divebombing thing in the village." He said.

"Yeah." I said. "Any others that you care to hear?"

"Well, what else you got?" He put a hand up on his hip.

"Timberjack, Thunderdrum, Terrible Terror, Monstrous Nightmare, Boneknapper, Deadly Nadder. You name it, I most likely got it." I winked.

"Boneknapper, huh? Let's hear it." He folded his arms.

I licked my lips, took a deep breath and began the roar but halfway through, coughed. "Oops. Still a bit rusty." I coughed again. "All right, one more time." I repeated my previous actions and this time, Gobber freaked a bit.

"The Boneknapper's come to the village. He's coming back for me, that ugly bag of bones!" He wove his hook hand in the air. "I'd like to see you try and beat me now!"

"Should we leave?" I asked.

"Oh yeah." Hiccup nodded.

\* \* \*

><p>I attempted to mimic a Night Fury trill but I was still a bit rusty on the noise. I cleared my throat and attempted once again.</p>

"What are you doing?" Snotlout asked in disgust.

I made the noise of a Night Fury divebomb then trilled loudly.  
"Practicing my dragon calls." I said. "It's been a while."

"All right, guys. Pay close attention." Hiccup said to the others. He cupped his hands on either side of his mouth, turned his head up and howled through the air. You could hear the howl but also hear the roar of a Night Fury mixed with it.

"That's why you brought us out here? To honk into the wind?" Snotlout asked irritably.

"Just wait, Snotlout." Fishlegs said.

"Dragon calls. Whatever." Snotlout scoffed. He sat up on a fallen tree, and smirked while pulling something from his back pocket.

Hiccup turned his attention to the twins that had focused looks on their faces. He furrowed his brows at them, "Uh, guys?"

No response. They followed the reflection of light off the metal that Snotlout pulled out.

"Idiots." He laughed.

"Snotlout." Hiccup scolded.

"So stupid."

"Seriously?" I asked loudly for him to pay attention to me.

"What? It's fun." He responded bluntly. I gave a very scolding look in his direction with crossed arms and my lips pulled back to emphasize my facial expression of displeasure. He put the metal away and sighed. "Fine."

Hiccup howled into the air again.

"And nothing. Can we go now?" Snotlout asked.

As if on queue, a response came through from Toothless. He roared back to Hiccup.

"You were saying?" Astrid smirked.

Toothless landed in the cove with the rest of us.

"Fine. I hate to admit it but that was pretty cool." Snotlout said.

"Not as cool as that disappearing shiny thing." Tuffnut cut in. "You can never catch it."

"Fishlegs, you wanna show us your dragon call?" Hiccup asked.

"Thought you'd never ask." Fishlegs said confidently. "The call of the Gronckle is as unique as the dragon itself; raw, guttural, intense, yet with a subtle lilt."

Snotlout began to stammer. "Just do it already!" He ordered.

Fishlegs let out a deep growl and Meatlug came flying down into the cove not too long after. Okay, directly after.

"Well done, Fishlegs." Hiccup praised.

"Oh, I'm not done. Watch this." He made the growl deeper and louder.

"I don't even wanna know what part of his body that came from." Tuffnut rolled his eyes. Ruffnut sat back with a somewhat disgusted look on her face. "Or do I?" Ruffnut looked at him slowly but he paid no mind to it.

Fishlegs began to pant, "I got to take a knee." He said and knelt down in exhaustion. A wave of Gronckles flew overhead, about six or seven of them.

"Wow. Nice herd." Tuffnut gasped.

"Be home for dinner!" Fishlegs called to Meatlug after allowing her to go flying off with the other Gronckles. "We're having granite! That's her favorite."

"Okay, anybody think they can beat that?" Hiccup asked. I shrugged.

"I'll give it a shot. Watch this." Astrid said. She stepped up onto a rock, put a hand to the side of her mouth and howled. Five Deadly Nadders flew above us and Stormfly flew to join them.

"Good job, Astrid. First try." Hiccup praised her. I gave her a thumbs up.

"Uh, I have an important question." Tuffnut said.

Hiccup sighed. I looked over at him and asked "Is it actually important this time?"

"Uh, yeah. It always is. Like, why are we even doing this anyway? I don't get it."

"Well, first of all, you never know when you're going to be seperated from your dragon. And the only way to communicate is to call it." Hiccup informed.

I looked away and bit my lip again. I wish that could be the case with me.

"Sorry, didn't get it." Tuffnut shook his head.

"Second of all, it's Bork Week, and my dad asked us to put on a dragon air parade."

"Why do we care about this Bork guy anyway? Wasn't he a dragon killer?" Ruffnut asked.

"Hey, Bork only killed dragons in self defense. He studied them, learned about them, lived and breathed them." Fishlegs defended.

I couldn't help but to add in. "And without him there would be no Book of Dragons. Without the Book of Dragons, there would be no-"

"Reason for you and Ingeman to live?" Snotlout mocked. The twins chuckled. A rock came into contact with his helmet and he glared at me. "Ow!"

"Remember, don't pick fun at Berserkers." I huffed. "Anyway, without the Book of Dragons, there would be no dragon training academy."

"And there would be no really cool dragon air show." Hiccup added.

"So when we do this really cool dragon air show, who's he gonna fly with?" Snotlout gestured to Toothless.

"It would be Shadow but since he isn't here, well, I don't know. I'm kind of working on that." He glanced at me briefly through the corner of his eye.

\* \* \*

><p>We watched a group of Gronckles fly overhead. I sat on the ground in front of Toothless and Hiccup stood next to us.</p>

"I wish there were other Night Furies for ya, bud. With the exception of Shadow, you know." Hiccup said then covered when I turned to him with a deadpanned look.

I felt Toothless move from behind me and just about knock me over but I sat up straight again. Astrid came in on Stormfly, "There you are. Hey, check out my Nadders. I finally got them flying in perfect formation." She said.

The Nadders flew by in a V-shape above us.

"Yeah, wow. That's-that's great." He said but didn't sound excited at all.

"Hiccup?" She asked.

"I've just been thinking that Stormfly has other Nadders, Hookfang has a whole herd of Monstrous Nightmares. And Toothless has... Toothless has no one other than Shadow."

"He has you." She said. "And he looks pretty happy if you ask me."

Toothless had been rolling playfully in the grass and it made me smile a bit.

"You know what I mean." Hiccup said quietly.

"Hiccup, Toothless will be fine. And Shadow will show up sooner or later, Al." Astrid said then made her way back to Stormfly. "Oh, yeah. I almost forgot, Gobber and Stoic are looking for you two. They want to see you in the great hall. They looked serious." She left on Stormfly.

"Oh, man. What'd I do this time?" I asked then sighed. "Happy Bork Week to us."

"Al, you haven't done anything wrong." Hiccup said then gave a gentle push to my back. "Get up. We've got to go."

"Sure thing." I said.

\* \* \*

><p>We entered the great hall which was dark. The lighting wasn't the best and the fireplace in the middle of the great hall didn't illuminate much of the darkness, many large Vikings stood around the fire. It all looked very creepy if you ask me.</p>

Especially when they turned around with dark looks on their faces.

"Okay, this is weird." Hiccup said what we were both thinking.

"Hiccup and Alyssa, come forward and hold out your hands." Stoic ordered. We did as we were told but after only a second, Hiccup pulled back a bit.

"Uh, dad, Gobber, other scary-looking Vikings, I'd just like to say in our defense that we \_cannot control \_Snotlout or the twins twenty-four hours a day.\_"

"This isn't about those jokers, kids. It's something really good." Gobber whispered the last part though everyone had heard. Stoic sighed.

"Now then, Hiccup, Alyssa, as you both know, Bork week has begun. The

first one since we've made peace with the dragons. So it has been decided that from this moment forward that all things dragon-related, including Bork's life's work shall be entrusted to you and the academy."

Hiccup and I's eyes widened and we glanced at each other in disbelief then back at him. A chest was placed on the table and we were allowed to get closer.

"This is where the Book of Dragons started." Gobber said. The chest opened and there pages and journals full of dragon information.  
"Everything he ever wrote on the subject is in these notes; personal thoughts, feelings, fears, even some delicious recipes."

"Whoa. I... I don't know what to say." Hiccup managed.

"It's an incredible honor." I smiled at them brightly and gratefully though now I was hurting more than I had been.

"Thank you, dad. This is—" Hiccup began but Stoic cut him off.

"Kids, this is a big part of our history. You and the dragons are a big part of our future. It's now up to you to take care of both." Stoic put either of his hands on Hiccup and I's shoulders.

The chest was closed after everything went back in and Gobber held it out. Hiccup reached over to take it but Gobber had a firm grip on it.

"Gobber." Stoic scolded but when he didn't let go, said it louder.  
"Gobber!"

"Right." Gobber said and let it go. "They're yours now."

Hiccup couldn't exactly hold it properly and kept shifting his weight around. I put my hands under the chest and give him a look that softly said 'I'll help. Let me carry it.' He let it go and let out a breath of relief.

I held it in one arm and had it by my side. Hiccup grinned at me and made a head gesture for us to leave. I nodded and we walked back to the Haddock house.

After going through a large assortment of notes and a couple of scrolls, we were beginning to become much more in awe than we already were.

"Whoa." Hiccup said out loud. I looked up at him, he looked at me then Toothless. "Just look at all of this. It's amazing." Toothless yawned with his teeth retracted then they suddenly shot out and he laid down.

Hiccup picked up another journal and began to carefully flip through it. "These are his personal notes. Everything he ever learned about dragons is right here." He paused with a confused look on his face. He tilted the journal in a few different directions. "Along with some rather interesting sketches of his neighbors."

I stifled a laugh when he gave a sudden shudder and closed it

quickly. "Can't unsee that." He said and dropped it to the side. It showed that one of the cover pages was lifted. I cleared my throat and pointed at it. He looked down and observed it. He picked the journal back up and pulled out a few pieces of folded up paper.

I reached over and grabbed the journal from his lap without him noticing and began to flip through the pages. My eyes widened, I slammed the book shut and placed it on the ground. I put my face between my knees and folded my arms out over them.

"Enjoy what you saw?" Hiccup asked knowingly.

"Shut up." I responded; muffled. I heard him laugh then gasp slightly. "What is it?" I looked at him.

"These papers are all on Night Furies." He wove the pages around a bit. I jumped to his side, scanning over the pages in his hands.  
"Toothless, it's all about you, bud."

Toothless looked up briefly then put his head back down. He didn't really pay any mind to it.

"Bork didn't put any of this in the Book of Dragons." I said.

"I know!" Hiccup nodded and looked at another page. This page had eggs on it and evolution stages of a Night Fury's life.

"Wow." I gasped quietly.

Hiccup began to read from the pages, "'My studies lead me to conclude that an entire island exists teeming with mysterious Night Furies. I call this land the Isle of Night.'" He looked up at me. "Al, did you hear that? Shadow could have went there!"

I felt excitement in me at the thought. Toothless got up and walked over to us, he began to brush against us with his head.

"We have to find that island." Hiccup said. "We find that island, we find your family and maybe even find Shadow."

Toothless looked excited at the mere thought of the fellow Night Fury being on this mysterious Isle of Night. I knew how it felt. I was ecstatic at the thought of finding Shadow and other Night Furies but mostly Shadow. Baby Night Furies, I wonder what their size is and how the eggs might look.

"Al, come on. Let's rest up. Tomorrow, we're heading for Bork's cave." Hiccup said. I gave a nod to him with a smile on my face.

"You got it."

\* \* \*

><p>"So let me get this straight. To find this island, we have to check Bork's cave?" Snotlout asked.</p>

"His last known residence." Fishlegs said.

"Who would live in a cave?" Astrid asked. I rose my hand.

"Who wouldn't?" Tuffnut asked. I put my hand down.

"There must be something about the Isle of Night and where we can find it." Hiccup said.

"Bork's notes said his cave was cut into the mountains right above Odin's shield." Fishlegs informed. Just then, we saw the cave cut into the side of the mountain.

"Right there!" Hiccup said. "That must be it."

We came in and landed. Tuffnut was the first to speak, "Okay, so how do we know what we're looking for?"

"It's a cave. Look for a big hole in the side of a mountain." Astrid said.

"Hole. Check." Tuffnut said.

"Mountain. On it." Ruffnut said. The two walked off on their Zippleback.

"You know, we don't have to bring them everytime." Astrid said. Then we heard a deep and moaning-like call. We all put our hands over our ears and shot up in surprise.

"What was that?" Fishlegs asked Snotlout.

"That is a Changewing call, my friend. Surprised you didn't know that." He answered.

"That wasn't a Changewing! That was a Red Death plummeting to its doom!" I shouted.

"Besides, this is a Changewing." Fishlegs said and let out a high-pitched screech.

"Bet you can't do a Thunderdrum." Snotlout attempted to challenge.

"Puh-lease. At least challenge me." Fishlegs said, took a deep breath and bellowed loudly.

"Fishlegs, quit it." Snotlout said.

"Ow!" Astrid held her hands over her ears.

"Stop it! Stop!"

"You sound terrible." Ruffnut said.

"Okay, okay. Enough, Fishlegs. That's good." Hiccup said. Fishlegs stopped and giggled giddily. I rose my brows in amusement before Toothless began to walk off.

We saw the other side of one of the mountains. "Hey, I found an opening." Hiccup said. We all began to walk for a bit on while on the dragon's backs.

"That Bork was a dweeb but, boy, he could climb like a mountain goat." Snotlout said.

Suddenly, a booming Thunderdrum call rang out from nearby. Hiccup turned around and said "Fishlegs, I thought we agreed to ease up on the dragon calls."

"Actually, that wasn't me. Mine's far more authentic." He said. Then a Thunderdrum came swooping in behind us.

"You wanna tell that to him?" Astrid asked.

"Quick, to the cave!" I said. We flew out to where we saw the hole but it wasn't there any longer.

"Wait. What cave?" Ruffnut asked.

"There was a hole!" Astrid said.

"Yeah, and now the hole's gone." Tuffnut said. The Thunderdrum swooped in over us but we ducked.

"Snotlout, Ruff and Tuff, you guys look for the cave opening." Hiccup said. "We'll lure the Thunderdrum away." We began to fly though the air once again. "Fishlegs, Thunderdrum call!"

"I wish you'd make up your mind." He said then took some time to clear his throat.

"Fishlegs!" Hiccup and I both shouted. Fishlegs gave the Thunderdrum call and it zoomed up after him.

"Hiccup, you and Al go and see what you can find. We'll keep this guy busy." Astrid said.

"What about Snotlout?" Hiccup asked.

"Not feeling the trust!" Snotlout's voice echoed off the walls of the mountain.

"Ruff! Tuff!" Astrid called to them.

"On it!" Ruffnut said.

"You're giving me the twins?" Snotlout asked. The Changewing banged him against the side of the mountain. "Okay! I'll take the twins!"

"Go!" Astrid said.

Toothless flew into a cave and after less than a moment of flying, we came across a few spears, shields and other things. "Bork's cave. This is it." Hiccup said. "We have to hurry, guys."

We began to fly though a bit more, it was deeper than it looked.

"Let's see what we can find." I said and leapt off Toothless. Hiccup got of then we heard Toothless fire then the room lit up because he shot into a fireplace.

"Thanks, bud." Hiccup said then his attention was drawn upwards.

"What's that?"

"It appears to be a map." I said.

"Not just any map. A map to the Isle of Night!" Hiccup said. "We found it, guys! I got to get this down." He pulled out his notebook and began to sketch the map down onto the pages then stopped abruptly when an explosion hit the outside of the cave and caused rocks to fall from the ceiling. "What was that?"

"Don't know." I said. It happened again but this time, we heard the Thunderdrum and the roof of the cave began to split and crumble.

"No, no, no, no, no!" Hiccup said quickly. "Come on! I need more time."

A rock almost fell on him but I was too slow to get to him, thank goodness Toothless was there and covered him with his wing. Hiccup finished writing the map down and got on his dragon's back, I leapt on right behind him.

"That's it. Now let's get out of here." He said. As we were about to escape, the roof of the cave fell in front of the entrance/exit. "So this is just great. We're trapped here and you can't use your shots without bringing the whole ceiling down."

We were down under one of Toothless's wings and being kept safe from any more falling rocks. Toothless looked around briefly then let out a strange roar.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa!" Hiccup gasped. "What was that?"

Toothless turned his ear plates around a few times then bumped us both back up onto his back. He roared again then began to fly off.

"Whoa, where are you going? And how are you seeing?" Hiccup asked. Toothless gave the roar out again then Hiccup let out a scream, we exited the cave and I looked around in shock.

"Yes! We got it! Thanks, bud." Hiccup said.

"Thor, is that you?" I asked.

"Al, we're alive." Hiccup panted.

Toothless turned and we flew over to Astrid and Fishlegs.

"You guys made it!" She said.

"Yes but please don't ask us how because we have no idea." He responded.

"We got this under control. Go help Snotlout." She said.

So we flew over to help Snotlout that was being held closely by the Changewing from earlier. It ate a bit of grass, chewed it up, then hacked it out on Snotlout's head. Hiccup and I held back a laugh.

"Aw, you made a new friend." He said.

"Yeah, it's not as friendly as it looks." Snotlout said while the Changewing nipped at him. We leapt into action and Toothless fired at the Changewing, forcing it to let go of Snotlout and said Viking fell into the canyon below.

"Hookfang, now!" I called out. Hookfang flew up and caught his rider on the back of his neck.

While flying through the air to go back home after this long day, Astrid said "I still can't believe you guys survived that cave-in."

"Neither can we." I said.

"I mean, it was all Toothless. He made this weird sound that bounced back towards us and somehow he used it to find his way out." Hiccup said.

"I don't get it. How do you use sound to guide you?" Fishlegs asked.

"I do it all the time. Whenever I hear your voice, I go the other way." Snotlout laughed.

"I use it a lot." I said. "Back when the dragon training academy was still an arena, you know, before we accepted dragons into the village, I used sound to find you and Hiccup in the smoke from the Zippelback explosion. That's only one of many times that I've used it, though."

"Huh." Astrid acknowledged what I had said. "So did you guys find anything?"

"Only a map. To the Isle of Night." Hiccup said.

"Nice! When do we leave?" She asked.

"Tomorrow morning." Hiccup said then patted Toothless's head. "By this time tomorrow, bud, you are going to be knee-deep in Night Furies." Toothless gave an acknowledging growl as we continued to fly home.

\* \* \*

><p>After getting home, Hiccup was still doing a lot of inspecting and research on the Isle of Night. He was sketching it all down intently and I sat back petting Toothless affectionately which was to his pleasure.</p>

"It says there's a reason there's only Night Furies on that island." Hiccup said suddenly. Toothless and I both looked up at him.

"What would that be?" I asked.

"Turns out that they aren't so friendly to other dragons." Hiccup said. Toothless gave an acknowledging grumble to him that also sounded a bit nervous to me.

"'Herds of Night Furies can be extremely hostile to other species.' If the other kids come with me on their dragons..." He trailed off. "Well, I guess that it'll just be us then, guys."

He shut the notebook, picked up his satchel and gathered up supplies. We left the house and got up onto Toothless's back.

"Well, this is it, Toothless." Hiccup said.

"Yep. We're finally going to see that you and Shadow aren't alone." I said. Toothless purred and after Hiccup getting his foot into the stirrup, we flew off into the night.

"Next stop, the Isle of Night." Hiccup said.

#### 34. We Are Family Pt 2

\*\*snake screamer: Thank you.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"So, Hic, how do you think that the eggs look? I'm kind of thinking a smoothe, charchoal looking egg that's maybe the size of a fist." I asked.</p>

"Hmm. Seems a bit small, doesn't it?" He asked.

"Well, Hiccup, Terrible Terrors lay eggs that are about the size of their body. Seems a bit big, doesn't it?" I asked in a playful retort.

"Okay, you got me there. They might be able to fit in your hand so for sure, if the eggs are that size, they can't be born much larger than a Fireworm dragon." Hiccup said.

"I wonder if their packs operate differently from others. Like, is there an alpha? How can you tell? Just things like that." I wondered out loud.

"Well, let's find out when we get there." He grinned at me. "Shadow's got to be there. I just know it. Who knows? It could be Night Fury mating season and that could be why he left."

"Maybe." I said and looked around slowly. "Do you think he'll be excited to see us?"

"He's got to be. I mean, you're his whole world. I know for a fact that he would never abandon you. Just like me with Toothless and you with me. That's just how it is." He said optimistically then he turned back ahead. "Hey, I think that's it."

I squinted to see the land mass in the distance better. It was a bit dark but there was plenty of plants on it so there was some life to the place. I looked around and saw no other islands.

"Well, I don't see any other islands around here so I think this would be our best guess." I joked slightly. He nudged me with his elbow gently and a bit playfully and we descended onto the island.

I looked around for a bit but saw nothing. It felt strange on this island. Toothless seemed to notice it too because he let out a concerned growl.

"Don't worry, bud. If this map is right, we're going to like what we find here." Hiccup said. Toothless went running for a bit then we stopped near a more empty and mountainous terrain. "Ready, guys?" Toothless gave a grunt of agreement and I gave a nod. "Okay, here it goes."

Hiccup cupped his hands next to his mouth and howled, I tilted my head back a bit and let out a soft yet loud trilling noise. After a second or two of no response, there was a growl returned from a distance. Hiccup and I looked at each other then at Toothless.

"I can't believe it! Did you hear that?" Hiccup asked. Toothless let out a grunt and we saw something move into our line of sight. Toothless perked an ear up and Hiccup was internally jumping for joy. "Bork was right." We both got off of Toothless. "Go get him, Toothless."

Toothless leapt down and began to approach the figure but turned back and looked at us.

"It's okay. Go, go. We're right behind you." Hiccup said. Toothless continued onward and as we began to approach, we noticed that it was quiet. Too quiet if you ask me. Then there was the sound of a rattling chain that I heard and looked around carefully. Suddenly, a large black figure flew into view and shoved Toothless back with a warning growl.

"Toothless!" Hiccup cried out in alarm.

Upon further inspection, Night Fury. A chain was around its neck and being dragged across the ground. Chains that looked as old, rusty and worn like this one I'd seen somewhere before but I pushed that thought aside for the time being. His wings were spread wide and blocking Toothless from going any further and there was a look of concern in the dragons eyes. A scar trailed down under one of its wings and after a good look at the dragon, I realized that I'd know this dragon anywhere.

"Shadow!" I called. The Night Fury tilted its head up in my direction, the narrowed eyes grew large and he zoomed up to me. He landed in front of me with the chain around his neck rattling, he growled a warning to me and spread his wings out so I didn't move past him.

"Shadow, what's gotten into you?" I asked.

"How are you, bud?" Hiccup asked and knelt.

Shadow gave a louder growl then forced me back with a push from his head. He perked his ears up in concern then growled at us again. Hiccup stood up straight and looked at me in surprise. I shrugged in shock since I couldn't find words.

Toothless began to look a bit worried. Shadow gave another warning growl to him and a head gesture for him to come back. He looked back

at us and he tossed me up on his back. He began to make head gestures for us to leave.

Hiccup's eyes widened. "Toothless, come back!" Toothless turned to run back to Hiccup but a bola shot out of nowhere and wrapped his four legs together, knocking him to the ground. "Toothless, no!"

Something pulled Shadow back by the chain and he gave a deep and dark growl as he attempted to pull away. I turned to look then large hands grabbed me and pulled me off, I thrashed wildly but was still careful not to hit Shadow as I thrashed around.

I looked around, Outcasts. Of course.

"Get off of me!" I elbowed one in the chest. "Don't make me go berserk!"

"You won't put up much of a fight." Slade said. "Terrible Terrors put up more of a fight than you."

I looked down at my dragon that I'd barely gotten to see only about a minute ago be tackled to the ground by many of the Outcasts. He pushed and shoved, attempted to bite and scratch until a muzzle was placed over him and was held down while a couple of Outcasts held onto the chains so he didn't wander off.

"Your dragon put up quite the fight, though. He's broken countless chains of ours. The new, the old. We have few left. He killed about four of our men and injured more than enough." Slade cackled and spoke as if it was no big deal. "Strong but stupid. He kept getting caught."

Shadow growled at him with eyes that begged to see his blood. An evil, dark and hateful look was kept on Slade from Shadow's narrowed irises that was enough to pierce the soul.

"You can't look at me like that." Slade growled. "Remember what happened last time?"

Shadow blew out a large amount of smoke from his nostrils and struggled against his many restraints. He was shaking from how much anger and force he was putting into trying to break out again. His narrowed irises were actually shaking from how much rage that must have been racing through him.

"Do you need a reminder?" Slade asked and knelt to his side. He huffed harshly in his direction with thick black smoke emitted from his nostrils; deeply growling and never breaking eye contact with him. "Alyssa, train your dragon to show respect to his authority or else."

"You aren't authority. You're a low-lifed, half-witted, good for nothing, scum-sucking, munge bucket—"

"Don't you remember what happened last time you spoke to me like that?" He tilted his head with a bored look in his eyes.

"Go ahead and hit me. Now, listen, do what you want with me but do not, I repeat, \_do not\_ hurt the others. Let them go." I glared into

his eyes. He snorted a laugh out. "What's so funny?"

"You think it's so easy to bargain like that. Idiot." He snickered. "This isn't a game of give-and-take. Outcasts are supposed to be much smarter than that, you, however, are by far the stupidest. Now, about your dragon here. He has problems. Maybe he takes after you." He walked around and put a foot up on Shadow's side. He growled and jerked his body upwards, sending Slade tumbling back a foot or two. Slade, in a fit of anger, kicked him in the back.

Yes, kicked.

He freaking kicked my dragon.

The Berserker in me surfaced immediately. I used all of my strength to thrash around, kicking blindly, elbowing, and biting. I headbutted one in the face and heard a cracking noise, when I turned, his nose was bloody.

Kind of like my vision.

My vision was red.

A deep, dark red.

I bit down hard on one of the Outcasts arms and felt the blood flow into my mouth. I made sure to glare each of them in the eye as I attacked so they made sure not to mistaken me for being so 'weak' as Slade would say. Also to prove just how insane and berserk I actually was.

I was pried off and turned to meet the person's eyes. Slade was holding me up by the back of the tunic and I glared him in the eyes with nothing more than hatred, anger, rage and most of all, white-hot \_fury\_.

I reached a hand up for my sword so I could stab him but he grabbed my arm and held it down to my side. I felt chains being wrapped around me and held me back from attacking. I could still kick and bite so I reached up to kick Slade where no man should be kicked but he shoved me to the ground.

I panted heavily with a wild look still in my eyes. My vision of red not fading. Slade cackled, "You still think that you're so strong. Just because you got this far, doesn't mean that you'll last. We \_can\_ break you and we \_will\_."

"I doubt it." I said boredly.

"Slade, stop playing with the dragon trainer!" Alvin scolded. "We need both her and the dragon, don't you forget that."

"I couldn't help myself." Slade said disgustingly sweetly. I felt like I was about to puke.

"Doesn't matter." Alvin said then looked at me. "Both you and Stoic's little runt are going to be training my dragons. I'll use them to destroy Berk once it's done."

"Shove it." I snarled.

"Cute." Alvin chuckled. "Get her on the ship with the boy."

"And the dragon?" Savage asked.

"Make sure the beast doesn't break free again."

I stared Shadow in the eye, he looked apologetic. He looked away in shame but I tapped my foot to get his attention. He looked back at me.

"I love you, Shades." I said. He purred and looked pretty relieved. He still looked upset and when Outcasts began to grab me, he grew angry and struggled against them. He was eventually gathered up and we were carried to the Outcasts ship.

"How'd you do this? I don't understand." I said; demanding an explanation.

"You'll see." Slade shoved me in the shoulder. "Now hurry up. Just because the Night Fury is fast doesn't mean you are."

"Shut your nasty, stubbled face. The little piggy with the double-chinny chin chin." I retorted.

"Shut your overworked mouth." He slapped me in the back of the head and shoved the wind out of me. I panted slightly and gasped for breath, I glared at him and reached over to bite him but he grabbed my chin and shoved me aside.

"Shove it." I snarled then walked on. "Where's Hiccup? I swear if you hurt him then I'll do worse things to you than what is ever capable of happening in your nightmares."

"He's up on deck." Slade used his foot to kick me along and make me go faster. I walked on and saw Savage 'escorting' Hiccup onto the deck, he kicked him onto the deck. I ran over and snapped my jaws at him but he learned from last time and pulled back. I reached a leg upwards and attempted to kick but Slade pushed me onto the boat by my shoulder and I fell on my back. I glared up harshly with heavy breathing.

"I swear, I'll make you pay for this." I got up on one knee and stood defensively in front of Hiccup. I gave a brief glance back to Shadow and Toothless.

I couldn't believe it, though.

All this time, Shadow was being held captive on Outcast Island.

"Shadow, bud. I am so sorry. I thought that you might have flown away because you were bored of the same old thing or something like that. I should have known better. I'm so sorry this had to happen." I walked over and leaned on his head slightly. He purred and tilted his head to lick me.

"You know that I'd never want anything like this to happen to you." I held back the tears and rubbed my head against his. He did the same thing back, purring comfortingly all the while. "Right now I just

want to steal all of your guys's pain away. I feel like this is my fault. If I hadn't left back on Outcast Island-

"Al, it isn't your fault." Hiccup said. "There's no way you could've known something like this would happen."

I looked him in the eyes with relief that I was able to see him yet with sadness because all this had been happening and I didn't do a thing about because I had refused to believe that he was on Outcast Island.

Slade's words ran through my head. What he said about Shadow.

"Killed four men?" I asked. Shadow turned away, refusing to look me in the eye now. That was all the confirmation I needed. He let out a soft groan, Hiccup turned and looked at us.

"What?" He asked.

"Slade said Shadow killed four of the Outcasts." I said. I put my face in front of Shadow's forcing him to look me in the eye. "I don't mind, bud. I would have done the same if it meant I got to see you again."

Shadow stared at me sadly then at the other two with us. He let out a sigh and stared apologetically at all of us. Hiccup gave him a nod, Toothless gave a trill, I rubbed my head against his.

"It's okay, bud." I said. "We'll get out of this, I promise. We'll make it home and I can smoke you some salmon, we can sit by the fireplace, sleep together just like we used to."

Shadow laid his ears back submissively, he pushed his head up against me gently and purred gently. I gave a gentle kiss to his nose. I was glad to be back with my dragon but I didn't quite feel the same about the circumstances but whatever works, right?

"So, Hiccup," Slade began, Hiccup tensed up. He usually does when Slade speaks to him. "I'm guessing that you know our motive behind how we got you all here."

"Let me answer this." I said to Hiccup, he gave a slow nod. I turned back to Slade. "First of all, you needed your dragon trainers. You were somehow able to catch Shadow on our last trip to Outcast Island and kept him locked away in hopes of us coming back here."

"Hm, so far you're right. But could you unravel a bit more of the story for us, weakling?" He gestured for me to continue with a smirk.

"Yes, I can." I said flatly. "When we didn't return, you all had made the more direct approach on us, making this fake island and knowing that we'd think that Shadow was here along with other Night Furies so they wouldn't be so alone. Now, how you managed to get that fake map into our hands is beyond me."

Slade chuckled darkly, "Yes, that would be correct. Would you like to know how we got that fake map for the so-called 'Isle of Night' onto your island?"

Hiccup and I both exchanged a glance then stared back at him. With a smirk, Slade stepped aside and a familiar Berkian walked up on the ship with his trusted sheep by his side.

"Mildew." I snarled.

"Mildew? What are you doing here?" Hiccup asked.

"Ah, the brightest kids on the island yet here you are; trapped by a silly, old man and his sheep." Mildew said; not answering the question.

"How could you do this?" He asked.

"You kids are the ones that did it. You believed our Bork notes, you followed the map we drew. You walked right into our trap, all for the love of the dragons." He mocked at the end. "Hmm, maybe you'll think twice next time about where you place your loyalties."

Alvin cackled as he walked up on deck, he pushed Mildew aside. "There won't be a next time. Raise the sails! We're headed home to Outcast Island."

The sails fell behind him and the ship began to sail away.

### 35. We Are Family Pt 3

\*\*Iron-Mantis: Thank you. I pretty much had that planned out. :)\*\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Well, being shoved through the halls on the inside of Outcast Island's prison cells wasn't in my top ten ways of transportation. I snapped my jaws each time they shoved Hiccup. We walked past many dragons but none of them familiar.<p>

"Where are our dragons, Alvin?" Hiccup finally asked. "Where are Toothless and Shadow?"

"You'll see 'em soon enough. Don't you worry." Alvin said.

"You know, I have to admit, luring us to the Isle of Night, building that fake Night Fury and using Shadow for the dragon calls and as a scent lure, not bad." Hiccup said.

Alvin chuckled. "Not bad, says the one-legged boy in manacles."

"But turning Mildew into an Outcast? Using him against us? Come on, Alvin. That's low-hanging fruit, even for you." He said. I began to snicker, Savage and Slade did too until a harsh clang hit the two older Vikings and made me snicker more but I was able to keep quiet.

"No one thinks you're funny, boy, now keep moving." Savage pushed him on. I snapped my jaws at him and got shoved by Slade, I huffed harshly.

We began to come across the more exotic dragons, first one being a

Whispering Death. It had ropes tied to either side of it and growled at the Outcasts in the cage with it. It dove under the ground but the ropes didn't break, the Outcasts grumbled their confusion until it popped back up and threw them back.

"You know it's going to keep doing that, right? It \_is\_ a Whispering Death." Hiccup said and got pushed along once again. I reached over to bite at him again but Slade saw it coming earlier than usual and popped me upside the head, emitting a growl from me.

Then there was a Cauldron guzzling down water, lapping it up greedily. It looked over at us, the water pouch under its chin wiggling around a bit. It breathed in then spit the boiling hot water out at us but Hiccup and I were able to see it and ducked.

"A Cauldron, impressive." Hiccup said. "You might want to cut back its water."

"Oy, write that down." Alvin said.

"See, I forgot my pencil back on the ship." I said. "Undo these restraints and I'll see what I can do."

"Nice try, lass but we aren't as stupid as you think." He said.

"Sure do look it." I mumbled.

"What was that?"

"I said 'Sure do look it.'" I said louder this time. I got a boot to the butt and it shoved me along. "Nice to know that you're all so welcoming."

We came across another dragon but apparently, no one else saw it.

"It's escaped again!" One Outcast said.

"Actually, no. It's right behind you." I said.

"Changewing." Hiccup informed.

The dragon appeared and spit out a gob of acid, we ducked back when it flew our way but it only hit the rusty old bars of the dragon's cell.

"Wow, you guys \_really\_ don't have a handle on these dragons, do you?" I asked rhetorically and sarcastically.

"Well, that's why you two are here. Welcome to your new job, kids." Alvin said and pushed us along.

"A job? Us?" Hiccup asked. "As inviting as that sounds, we're going to have to pass."

"We didn't hear anything from Aly-"

"No." I said quickly. "Forget it."

"Kids, kids, kids. Why do you have to make things so difficult?" Alvin asked.

"Really not the first time we've been asked that question." Hiccup said flatly.

We came across yet another cell, Night Fury. Chains and leather straps held Toothless up off the ground. Toothless was the only Night Fury in this cell.

"Toothless?" Hiccup asked. Toothless opened his eyes, saw Hiccup and began to thrash around while snarling. When he realized that it was pretty much useless, he calmed down. "Hang-hang in there, bud. I'll get you out."

"He's not going anywhere, neither are you two." Alvin said. "You will help me train these dragons."

"And if we don't?"

"Well, then they're no good to me. None of 'em! Especially yours." He pointed to us.

"Where's Shadow?" I asked suddenly.

"Well, we're keeping him separate from here." Slade boredly said and looked down one of the halls. "Down there. Heavy duty door with a few bars on it, just enough to see through. Care to have a look?"

Hiccup gulped and looked at me, I gave a nod. "Yes." He said.

"Normally, I'd say 'too bad' but Alvin's right here so I might as well." Slade shrugged. He escorted us down the hall and showed us the thick, heavy, metal door. He pointed inside where Shadow a chain around his neck attached to the wall, straps holding his wings to his body so he wouldn't be able to fly off.

"We did keep him in the other Night Fury's cage but after seeing that it wouldn't particularly be the safest thing to do, we put him back here. Not to mention that this is much more heavy duty and gets the job done pretty well. The stupid beast won't be able to escape."

I gave a quick glare to him. "Don't call him stupid because he has more brains than you have brawn."

His hand rose, Hiccup flinched away, Alvin shouted to Slade and stopped him.

"Hudson, knock it off! You're only there to show them the dragon then leave!" He shouted to him. Slade rolled his eyes while grinding his teeth together.

"Shadow." I whistled. He opened his eyes quickly and attempted to run for the door but the chain jerked him back. He growled at the chain then turned back to me with a trill. "Stay strong, bud."

He growled when he saw Slade but was unable of bearing his teeth because of the thick, leather strap around his mouth. He pulled at the chain suddenly and began to claw at the strap over his

mouth.

"Didn't I say to restrain his legs?!" Slade snapped; his voice echoing through this prison.

"Right away, sir." A couple of Outcasts ran through, unlocked the door and shut in to run inside and cuff him up more.

"Hurt him and I promise that you won't escape unscathed." I growled.

"Sure, sure." Slade shrugged. "Savage, escort them to their cells."

"Yes, sir. Right away, sir." Savage said then pushed us along. We approached Hiccup's cell first, "Can I get either of you anything? Food? A cozy blanket? Warm yak's milk?" He laughed then shoved Hiccup into his cell.

"I think you should have locked me away first." I said.

"And why's that?"

"Because Slade isn't around to hit me this time." I said then kicked him in the thigh. He used his bone to hit me in the shoulder. "Ow." I said flatly. "So, which is mine?"

"Over there." He pointed with his bone across the area. I dropped my head to the side and rose my brows.

"You don't have one with a window view?" I joked. He pushed me along harshly. "Wow, you guys need to ease up. It was just a joke. Or are jokes not good enough for you? There is no way that's possible because I've seen how your other plans fizzled out."

Savage growled and shoved me into the cell. It locked immediately and he began to walk away.

"Al, do you really have to tell them off each time that we see them? It's just going to make things worse." Hiccup said.

"For me but I don't mind. As long as they don't mess with you or the dragons, I don't mind." I said then began to pull at the chains around my wrists. "How Shadow managed to break these things is beyond me."

"I don't really know who they're trying to fool." Hiccup said. "They said Shadow broke from their chains and leather, what makes them think that what they're doing now is any different."

"On our way back, I heard a few of the other Outcasts grumbling about the stubborn Night Fury that attempted to burn and bust down the door but was unable to." I informed. "He broke from all else after a long struggle but the door was able to hold him back."

Hiccup looked off to the side. "I can't believe this." He sighed.

"I don't want to either, Hiccup but it's happened. We'll figure out a way out of here." I said. He looked back at me, "I promise. And you know that when I make a promise, I keep it."

He thought over what I'd said then shrugged. He leaned back against the wall and folded his knees up close to his chest.

An Outcast suddenly began to walk towards either of our cells with keys in their hand.

"Oy, come over here. We're getting those shackles off ya." One said. A quick thought passed through my mind.

When they had reached in for my hands, I put them farther out through the bars and once he had a firm grip on my hands. After the chains were unlocked, I pulled him forward roughly, hitting him against the bars. He looked a bit dizzy then he growled at me.

Okay, my plans have fizzled out before.

He grabbed the front of my tunic and pulled me towards the bars, "Oh, Hudson, wait until your father hears about this. Everything wrong that you do here doesn't go passed without punishment. Just you wait." He dropped me and began to walk away.

Hiccup stared slightly wide-eyed at me with a look of disbelief on his face. His shackles were already off so his hands had freedom. The other Outcast had left down the hall after the other one.

"Al, why did... what are you doing?" He asked and leaned near the bars.

"The plan was to hit him against the bars and knock him out, get the keys off him, unlock myself from this cell then you and once we found the dragons we could escape. As we all know, my plans aren't fool-proof." I said.

"Al." Hiccup sighed. "I don't want to lose you."

"I don't want to lose you either, Hiccup. You or the dragons. Anyway, I guess when Slade hears of this, I'm going to be punished with probably some scorching hot metal or something." I leaned against the wall tiredly and yawned.

Hiccup looked at me sadly then we both heard something get kicked slightly across the ground. I looked over and saw that there was Hiccup's pencil. He brought that and his notepad to sketch down the Night Furies on the Isle of Night. He saw the lock, gave a nod to me then put the large pencil in the lock to attempt to break out and grunted with a bit of effort.

"Alvin, I gave you what you wanted. We had a deal!" Mildew's voice said as they neared the cells. Hiccup put his pencil away.

"I didn't like that deal so I changed it." Alvin said.

"Oh, I believe you all know each other. Don't get too chummy." Savage said and shoved Mildew along into his cell. "Mildew's hours are numbered, much like you kids and the Night Furies. The one with the full-tail is pushing his limits, lass. Best he begins to calm down."

"Suck rocks." I said flatly. "He listens to me and only me. If you

want to keep him under control, best you let me out and take care of it."

"Yep, sure. We'll keep that in mind." Alvin said sarcastically. He then approached Mildew and snatched the sheep from Mildew's hold.

"No! What are you doing with me Fungus?" He asked.

"Preparing your final meal. It's lamb." Alvin said. The cell door shut on Mildew and the Outcasts began to leave.

"Fungus! No!" Mildew cried out and reached through the bars.

"Berkians, still as dumb as the day I left." Alvin said finally before they left completely.

"What have I done?" Mildew asked in devastation.

"Now you know how it feels to have something precious taken from you." I said slowly and flatly. "Anyway, I'm going to cry myself to sleep now. Sweet dreams, Hic." I said and curled up on the ground.

He sighed, "Sweet dreams, Al."

\* \* \*

><p>"Sure is taking a long time for Slade to get here." I said a few minutes after waking up. "Excuse me, guard! Where is Slade Hudson? I have a punishment due right about now and he hasn't shown up."<p>

"Quiet down in there!" He shouted at me.

"Ah, yes, Outcast Island." I began sarcastically. "Grey skies, filthy water, rotten food, dark and rocky lands, wonderful hostility. Everything from your nightmares and more, come on down to \_Outcast Island\_!"

"I said quiet down!"

"I was just pointing out Outcast Island's good points!" I said.

"You are getting on me very last nerve." He said.

"Oh, well." I shrugged. The Outcast gave me a firm glare then walked away. "Glares. I've been getting a lot of those recently." I shrugged.

Hiccup was down on his knees, back facing towards me and banging away at the ground with a rock.

"Really, this is so hard to watch." Mildew said.

"What now?" Hiccup asked.

"I just thought Stoic raised a smarter boy than this. You'll never save your dragon by sitting in this cell, digging in the dirt. You

need to go get him and \_soon\_!" He banged a fist against the metal bars.

"And how do you suggest I do that?" Hiccup asked.

"By giving Alvin what he wants." Mildew said. Hiccup was silent and thought this over for a bit.

"You aren't really considering it, are you?" I asked. Hiccup looked at me over his shoulder with a sigh then slowly nodded but with a wink. He sat back and removed his leg slowly while keeping an eye out for anyone that might have been coming down the hall.

\* \* \*

><p>"Slade, there you are. The girl's-" An Outcast began but Slade turned harshly and cut him off.</p>

"What is it, you pansy? Don't say that she's giving you problems \_again\_." He sighed. "Do I have to do everything around here myself?"

"No, it's not her this time. It's the Night Fury of hers. It's not moving or breathing. If it dies, so does our hope of training those dragons. Same with the boy's Night Fury, it won't eat or drink."

"Go and see what you can do about it then. Honestly, I couldn't care less about them, I'm only doing this because it was Alvin's dumb idea. 'Training the dragons.' Yeah, I'll bet."

"Sir, if you don't believe in dragon training then why are you determined to have them trained? Yes, I know that you said it was Alvin's idea but-"

"But nothing. That's all you need to know." Slade growled. "Now get into that Night Fury's cage and wake it up or else!"

The Outcast ran off in fear.

"I'm surrounded by idiots." Slade muttered to himself and no one else was around. "Especially you, Alvin. 'Friends.' I don't need these so called 'friends', I need followers. With you gone, Alvin, I can easily claim my place back at the top."

\* \* \*

><p>"Guard, guard! I can't take it, please!" Hiccup shouted. An Outcast approached his cell. "I'll tell Alvin whatever he wants to know, just let me out of here."</p>

The Outcast began to unlock the door, unaware of Hiccup's hands being behind his back and his metal leg missing. The cell door opened and Hiccup quickly and roughly whacked the Outcast on the side of the head with a high-pitched \_clang!

The Outcast fell back all the way to Mildew's cell, rubbed his chin and growled.

"That worked a little better in my mind." Hiccup said.

"Darn it, Hic, the neck! You hit the neck!" I said. "The neck always takes 'em down, how many times do I have to tell you?"

"Instead of yelling at me, maybe you'd like to help?" He asked as he was putting his leg back on.

The Outcast was about to run for Hiccup but Mildew's staff reached out and pulled him back to the bars and quickly knocked him out. The key slid to Hiccup's feet, he leaned over and picked it up, he looked back up at Mildew.

"Wow. Thanks." He said then ran over to my cell. He put the key in and unlocked it, "There you go."

I jumped out and did a quick stretch. "Let's go." We began to run down the hall but Mildew shouted at us.

"Wait, take me with you!" We stopped running and looked back at him.

"You're kidding me, right?" Hiccup and I asked in unison.

"No, I know how to get around this island." He said. "I can help you kids, please. Let me make it up to ya."

After a few seconds of consideration, Hiccup groaned in frustration. I gave a look to Hiccup and shook my head, he nodded his head back at me. When he began to approach Mildew's cell, I took the key from him.

"Bad idea. Nope. Thank you. Let's go." I said.

"Al, come on. Look at him." Hiccup said and gestured to Mildew.

"Do I have to?" I asked.

"Al, you know what I mean. Come on, are you really any better than them if you abandon a fellow Berkian?"

"Has-been Berkian." I corrected.

"He wants to redeem himself."

"Sure, sure." I rolled my eyes.

"Al, give me the key." He stuck his hand out. I rose a brow in annoyance. "Hand it over and I am not joking. Hand the key over, now."

I looked into his eyes, inspected his face then made sure that our eyes locked. He was staring me down with an outstretched hand as he waited for the key, I was staring him down as well then he jerked his hand forward impatiently. When I still didn't drop the key in his hand, he dropped it to his side and sighed.

"Al, I know that you don't want to let him out, honestly, I don't either but what choice do we have? I know that this is a really bad idea, I do but still, we can't just leave him here."

"Sure, we can. Watch." I said and turned my back to walk away but he

stopped me.

"Alyssa Nicolette Hudson, get back here!" He snapped. I drew my head into my shoulders and looked hesitantly back at him.

He hardly uses my full name. He only does that when he is infuriated with me and since I wasn't listening to him, he kind of had a right to be. I didn't really expect him to yell at me the way he did, though. I mean, it was Mildew.

\_Mildew\_ of all people, he wants to save \_Mildew\_.

"Okay, Al, tell you what." He folded his arms. "If Mildew screws this up, you can beat him up. Sound like a deal?"

I thought about it and glared at Mildew. I took a deep breath then reluctantly dropped the key in his outstretched hand. "Merry freaking Snoggletog."

"It'll be fine. \_I really hope.\_" He placed a hand on my arm then moved to release Mildew. "Don't make us regret this, Mildew."

As soon as he was released, we began to run down the halls to escape.

\* \* \*

><p>"Is he breathing?" One Outcast asked.</p>

"Don't think so." Another said. "Try and give him some food. Remember not to venture too close, remember what he did to the others."

"I know." He said. A fish was thrown next to Shadow's nose, his nostrils didn't open to sniff the fish, his ears didn't perk, he showed no response.

"Well, take the muzzle off him." One said.

"What? Why me?" The other asked.

"Becuase I said so, that's why."

"This is why I hate being paired up with you."

"Get in there and get the muzzle off him!"

"How about you?" The other shoved him so hard that he fell flat on his face next to the Night Fury. His eyes widened but he reached to remove the muzzle and was ready to run but the Night Fury suddenly shot up, the muzzle slipping off the side of his mouth, the straps over his wings falling to the side, the straps around his legs fell off with ease and the chain was broken just below the neck.

"Oh, no." He said.

Shadow's wings spread out wide and teeth bared dangerously, a paw swiped across the Outcast's face. Shadow growled deeply and pounced for the other one, he glared at him in the eye then gestured to the door.

"Uh, nice dragon. Good dragon?" He said. Shadow gave a deeper glare to the man and made another gesture to the door. "Uh, I'm afraid I can't do that."

Shadow laid his ears against his head in irritation then after a moment of thought, gave a dark smirk to the man. He turned around and used his fire on the walls, heating up the room significantly and the Outcasts immediately began to sweat.

In fear more of their own life at the moment, one of them opened up the cell door and almost slammed shut but Shadow leapt out of the door and stretched out with a relieved look on his face. He smirked darkly once again at the Outcasts that laid on the ground next to each other in fear then gave a confident huff.

Who's stupid now?

### 36. We Are Family Pt 4

\*\*Iron-Mantis: Sure thing.\*\*

\*\*BloodBendingDancer: Yep! Go, Shadow!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>We finally escaped from the prison and ran through to hide behind large rocks. There were a few dragons in the area that were growling and squeaking. Hiccup and I looked at Mildew.</p>

"What's the quickest way to get to the dragons?" Hiccup asked.

Mildew looked around, "Through that lava field." He pointed his staff at the area where the wild dragons rested.

"Let's go." I said. Me and Hiccup were about to run off but Mildew's staff flew up in front of us.

"Ah, you \_do \_realize those are wild dragons down there?" He asked.

"Yep." Hiccup said then we continued onwards. We approached the area with a few grumbles from Mildew. A Monstrous Nightmare fought with a Deadly Nadder over a bone. Gronckles growled at each other for invading the others personal space.

"Well, come on then. Let's go." Hiccup said and we jumped up to continue walking.

"Uh, let's not." Mildew said.

"We know what we're doing Mildew, just stay behind us." Hiccup said then continued onward.

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless ran through the pathways to search for Hiccup and the others. He turned down one path to see Outcasts coming from one side. They lifted their crossbows.</p>

"There's one of the Night Furies!" One said. Toothless growled and looked behind to see more Outcasts coming. Toothless growled again, more frustrated than anything this time but his ears perked at something.

A Night Fury divebombing noise. The screech rang through the air and fired at one of the groups, sending them flying back. Toothless gave an excited growl to see the fellow Night Fury that swooped in to his side with a smirk.

Toothless fired at the Outcasts on the other side and send them flying back just as Shadow did. He turned back to the fellow Night Fury and trilled softly, Shadow returned it. The two suddenly perked their ears at the men's shouting and ran off together to search for their riders.

\* \* \*

><p>We attempted to walk through the lava field, all of the dragons stared at us. Mildew kept whimpering as more and more dragons watched us. The last one we passed was a Deadly Nadder that stood in front of us; wings outstretched and growling.</p>

Mildew was about to swing his staff at it but I grabbed it and threw it away. "No, Mildew!"

"The last thing you want to do is threaten him." Hiccup said.

"Me? Threaten him?" Mildew asked.

"We have to show him he can trust us." He said and approached it.  
"Don't worry, we aren't here to hurt you." Hiccup stepped to the side of the Nadder and with a growl of approval, he petted its side.  
"That's it, fella."

"Very impressive." Mildew said. The Nadder jumped at him and examined him. Mildew cried out in fear.

"Really, he's just getting to know. They can sense fear so be relaxed." Hiccup said.

Mildew was standing up straight and extremely tense. "This is relaxed." He said; strained.

The Deadly Nadder nudged him playfully with its head, the other looked a bit more skeptical. "See? He want to be friends." He said.  
"Isn't that nice?"

"Got plenty of friends." Mildew said.

"Name one." I said. He was silent. "Exactly."

"We're going to need a way to get past those guards at that dragon pit." Hiccup said. "And I think we just found it."

"Eh, wha?" Mildew asked. The Nadder suddenly licked him, forcing an uncomfortable whine out of him.

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless sniffed about on the ground at the footsteps littering the area, Shadow staring at them and following them to the cells with Toothless right behind him until he walked face-first into a knocked-out Outcast that woke up, saw him growling and whimpered.</p>

He ran into one of the open cells and closed it, "A Night Fury, with my own eyes." He gasped. Shadow smirked back at Toothless, Toothless smirked back and nodded. Shadow roared at the man with his wings outstretched, making the man cower in fear. When he looked back up, Shadow huffed at him harshly and smoke blasted from his nostrils and into the man's face. He ran off with Toothless through the prison.

\* \* \*

><p>"Remember, dragon training begins and ends with trust." Hiccup said. "Both of yours." He took Mildew's hand and placed it up on the Nadder's nose then quietly murmured incoherent things. "Now, climb on."</p>

"Huh?" Mildew asked with raised brows.

Hiccup climbed on the Nadder with ease, Mildew began to mutter again and after a failed attempt of climbing on, he finally pushed himself up. "Wow. Uh, Mildew on a dragon." Hiccup said; grinning.

"It'll take some getting used to, that's for sure." I said.

The Nadder began to shift its weight around. "Eh, why's it doing that? What's happening?"

"It's okay, it's okay, it's okay." Hiccup kept repeating to soothe him. "He's just never had people on him before." He spit in his hand, "A dragon's hide is dry, you moisture from your hands will soothe him." The Nadder squawked gently in pleasure.

Mildew spit in his hand and rubbed the Nadder too. I began to look around.

"Al, what are you doing? Get on." Hiccup said.

"I think it'll be safer if we have more than one dragon in the group. The more, the merrier." I shrugged. "Go ahead, I can have the dragon sniff you out."

Hiccup thought it over, "Fine just promise me that you'll be safe."

"Promise." I grinned.

"Okay, good. Let's go." He said. The Nadder took off flying but I could still hear Hiccup for a bit. Mildew latched onto him. "H-Hey, okay. Uh, you know, there's a lot of dragon here, Mildew. Why don't you grab some of that?" I heard that and it made me utter out a soft laugh.

I looked around for the dragon I could use that would be very well performing in battle, I examined them then stopped when I heard two Night Furies cry out into the night.

I cupped a hand next to my mouth and growled loudly, I heard a growl again then a black figure flew through the air and tackled me to the ground lovingly. I looked at it in slight shock, "Shadow! Hey, bud!" I hugged him tightly. He purred then I heard something else land next to me, I glanced over to see Toothless.

Shadow got off me and I went to hug Toothless. He welcomed it and gave a gentle purr. "Hiccup will be so happy to see you both alright!" I said then my eyes widened. "Hiccup." I climbed onto Toothless and hooked my foot into the stirrup. "He took off to find you guys in the dragon cells. We've got to get him."

Toothless growled in approval, Shadow just growled. We flew into the air and flew to follow the scent of Hiccup. "Shadow, if you can, fly ahead and search them out to stop them from going any farther. They're on a Deadly Nadder." Shadow growled in acknowledgement and dashed ahead. "We'll get him, Toothless. Don't you worry."

\* \* \*

><p>He sniffed through the air and when he saw a far off Deadly Nadder swoop down, he perked his ears up and growled as he focused in on the area the Nadder swooped down to. He flew quickly toward the area and did a dip down to where they were, he saw the opening to the dragon cells and growled.</p>

He looked back for his rider and Toothless but after not seeing them, he turned his attention back to the dragon cells. He cautiously entered, making sure that no Outcasts were ready to jump out at him and once he saw Hiccup, he began to run in but skidded to a stop when he saw Mildew. He arched his back and growled, attempting to hold himself back from attacking the man.

They climbed back up on the Nadder, a Whispering Death lunged at them. Shadow spread his wings with a growl, he flew in and tackled the Whispering Death to the ground.

"Shadow!" Hiccup called.

"Someone get that Night Fury!" Alvin shouted.

Shadow looked up at Hiccup and smirked confidentially before the Changewing pulled him off the Whispering Death with a sharp growl. Shadow snarled and fired at it, causing it to singe the softer skin of the Changewing. The Cauldron snapped its jaws at him but he jumped back, he fired and hit the pouch below its neck, momentarily knocking the wind out of it and forcing it to cough up some of its water.

He roared at them all while standing defensively in front of Hiccup and the others, they knew that they outnumbered him and gave deep growls to him. The Whispering Death suddenly dove underground.

"At least that one's gone." Mildew said. Shadow rolled his eyes quickly and jumped back from the Whispering Death's long, whip-like tail with a growl. He made a quick head gesture for them to leave, Hiccup and the Deadly Nadder noticed this.

"Well, uh, not for long, actually. Changewings shoot acid, Cauldrongs

fire boiling water and Whispering Deaths hunt from underground!" He exclaimed at the end and sent the Deadly Nadder to run off.

Shadow growled at the three dragons, when he felt the rumblings beneath his feet, he flew in the opposite direction of which Hiccup flew off to. He turned his head as he kept flying straight to see the dragons slowly gaining on him, he smirked and they pounced.

He flew in a flip above them and instead of them tackling him, they tackled each other. Their large bodies got tangled up and he gave a huff in their direction before flying off to catch up with Hiccup.

He landed with them in one of the more open areas of Outcast Island with his chest puffed out proudly. Hiccup got off and pet his head, Shadow, unlike all the other times, welcomed this gladly and actually purred at him.

"Hey, bud. How are you doing?" He rubbed along his head. Shadow gave a soft blow of warm and comforting dragon breath along his face, followed by a slow, slimy lick. "I missed you guys. Where's Al and Toothless?"

Shadow's eyes suddenly widened when he remembered what the objective was and let out a groan. He sniffed the air and after pacing around, he found nothing and looked back to Hiccup with confusion and guilt.

"It's okay, bud. We'll be able to find them much easier now that you're here." He patted his head again. Shadow bowed to the ground to allow him on his back. "Really? You mean, I don't have to chase you just so I can get on your back?"

Shadow sighed, used his wing to knock Hiccup up onto his back then gave a smirk back to him. He gave a gentle growl to him. "All right, bud. Let's go find Al and Toothless."

"Hiccup!" His father's voice rang out.

"Right after we're done talkig to them." Hiccup said. Stoic landed in front of them on Thornado with Gobber behind him.

"Oh, thank Thor you're alright!" Stoic exclaimed. "Is that Shadow?"

"Yes, it is and I am but Toothless and Al might be in trouble." Hiccup said.

"And Mildew is on the back of that dragon." Tuffnut whispered.

"I know." Hiccup said.

Tuffnut was silent for a moment then said a bit loudly, "Weird."

Mildew was pulled of the Nadder's back suddenly and onto the ground by Gobber, he lifted his hammer arm and shouted. "I should run you through right now!"

"No, Gobber! Gobber, no." Hiccup exclaimed and stopped Gobber from

attacking Mildew. "He helped me escape. Dad, I owe Mildew my life."

They all stared at him in confusion, Shadow glared at Mildew then back at Hiccup for an explanation.

"Getting weird." Tuffnut said.

"I'll explain later." Hiccup said. "Right now, I have to get to Alyssa and Toothless."

"Or bring Toothless to you." Astrid said. "She's probably with him, that's why she isn't with Shadow."

Hiccup gave a quick nod, cupped his hands on either side of his mouth and imitated a Night Fury call that echoed through the area.

\* \* \*

><p>"Where in the name of Thor did he go?" I asked and put a hand over my eyes so I could see better through the morning sun. "He's not going off anywhere without me ever again."</p>

A Night Fury call hit our ears but it wasn't a real Night Fury call, it was Hiccup.

"Hiccup!" I called out. Toothless began to fly to the area where we heard the call. I put my hands around my mouth and called back. A real roar responded this time, Toothless called back. "Yes! Shadow's with him, bud!" I pet Toothless's head.

"There they are!" Hiccup called to the others that I just now noticed were flying behind him. He was on Shadow, Mildew was still on the Nadder, his dad and the other teens were following behind him on their dragons.

"Hey, guys!" I called then whistled. We all came in to land and I leapt off Toothless. He ran for Hiccup, Hiccup ran for him.

"Toothle-" He was playfully tackled to the ground and licked by his dragon, he laughed with the relief of seeing him again.

I felt eyes on me and looked up, Shadow stared curiously and expectantly. He looked over at the other two then back at me. I could tell by the look in his eyes that he wanted to do the same.

"Okay." I grinned and called "Sha-" He tackled me to the ground and gave a lick to my face. I couldn't help but to laugh and hugged his head tightly. "You had me worried, bud. Nice to see that you're okay." He purred and held me between his chest and chin in a hug but pulled back suddenly, turned his head up and growled. "Hm?"

"What's the matter, bud?" Hiccup asked Toothless who was growling as well. We followed their lines of sight to see Alvin standing there.

"Hey, kids! You weren't going to leave before we finished our business, were ya?" He asked. Hiccup stood and glared, I did the same. "That's what I'd expect from Stoic's little runt and the most

worthless of all Vikings. 'Alyssa the Awful.' The only reason you're awful is because you're nothing more than an extreme disappointment!"

Okay, that drew the line then crossed it. I felt myself shaking from anger.

"Oh, boy." Gobber said.

"Hiccup! Alyssa!"

I leapt onto Shadow's back without thinking.

I'm done with being a dissapointment.

I'm done with being an accident.

I heard Alvin's mocking laughter just before something shot both Shadow and I out of the sky, tied us together and tossed us onto the ground. I struggled harshly and began to bite at the ropes right before Hiccup and Toothless ended up rolling towards us and slammed up against us roughly.

I only remember hearing us all grunt in pain.

Pain.

They hurt all of us.

They hurt my precious ones right in front of me.

I saw red and pulled as hard as I could against the ropes, after a few seconds, I heard the ropes creaking from being stretched out. Outcasts began to approach us. I watched them with my reddened vision and kept thinking to myself that if this is the end, I will fight to the death. I'm going to protect these people that I can't live without if it costs me my life.

Luckily for us, everyone's dragons came in on their own accord and began to defend us. Barf did a cover fire with his gas, Belch sparked it and blew some of the Outcasts back.

"Yeah, we taught him that!" Tuffnut shouted. "We didn't teach them that did we? Yeah, I didn't think so."

Meatlug swooped in and made a protective ring of fire around us so the Outcasts wouldn't get to us. Shadow helped stretch out and snap the ropes. I patted his side and looked at Hiccup and Toothless. I was about to order Shadow to help but Stormfly and Hookfang lifted them out of the ring and sending quick grins our way before carrying them off to the other Vikings.

Shadow fired at a group of Outcasts, sending them flying back and dashed towards the others where they just cut Hiccup and Toothless free. The dragons joined our side again.

"What happened?" Hiccup asked.

"I was about to ask the exact same thing." I said.

"The dragons saved you guys on their own." Fishlegs said.

"Looks like they took their training to a whole new level." Astrid said.

"We can catch up later. Right now, we need to get out of here." Stoic said.

Just then, more Outcasts headed our way. The others got on their dragons and we flew into the air, Thornado threw a blast of his one of his powerful roars at them and threw them back.

Mildew was hanging off the edge of the Deadly Nadder's tail.

"Mildew!" Hiccup called out.

"For the love of Thor, Mildew, get back up here!" Gobber ordered. Mildew didn't oblige. "Don't you let go, old man."

"Tell the kids I'm sorry." He let go.

"Mildew!" Hiccup called out and turned to go back and help him.

Outcasts rushed up and held Mildew back. "Go, Hiccup. You have to leave me." He said. Crossbows were aimed at them. Shadow growled and fired at the arrows coming their way, knocking them away.

"He's right, son. We can't help him now." Stoic said. Hiccup reluctantly left.

\* \* \*

><p>"Too bad this wasn't the real thing." Hiccup said. We were at home looking at the fake map of the Isle of Night. "One bright side came out of it, though. We got Shadow back." He pet Shadow across the head, getting a purr back from him.</p>

"Whoa, he's purring at you? When did that happen?" I asked.

"I don't know, he did it back on Outcast Island. He licked me and actually bowed his head down for me to get on instead of running all over the place and forcing me to catch him." Hiccup explained.

"Looks like he's finally getting attached to you." I grinned, took the paper from him and threw it into the fire, watching as it turned black and crumpled away into ash.

"Getting back to the map and all; there's nothing wrong with being two of a kind, right?" Hiccup asked. I'm not quite sure who he asked but I think he was asking all of us. "I mean, come on, Al. You and me, Toothless and Shadow. Two of a kind, we were \_all \_made for each other."

I broke out into a soft smile and gave a slow nod.

The door opened and we all turned to see Astrid.

"Would you come on?" We stared at her in confusion. "Bork week. The parade?" She said to ring a bell.

"Oh." Hiccup and I said then grinned.

"Shall we?" I asked.

"Yes, we shall." He said.

For the parade, Shadow and Toothless flew side by side, exchanging smiles at each other. The same with me and Hiccup.

I was happy to be with my dear friends... No, my family. No matter what one says, a family isn't just something that you're born into; it's the friends who stood with you through the thick and thin and fought by your side.

You know that they'll always be there for you, just like you are to them for the battles yet to come.

Toothless and Shadow suddenly began to spin around each other with trills then dashed through the clouds ahead with large grins on their faces, Toothless's tongue hanging out of his mouth and flapping around in the wind. Hiccup and I suddenly exchanged another look from across our dragons.

A look that said "I'm here for you. Always have been, always will be."

\* \* \*

><p>Alvin held his hand out to the Whispering Death he released from its cell. The dragon hesitated before leaning in and placing its nose upon Alvin's hand, he began to laugh maniacly along with Mildew, who coughed then began to laugh again.</p>

Slade watched from the outside of the arena with narrowed eyes. "Trained dragons." He glared and turned, he began to walk away. "The blasted things can't be tamed, let alone tolerated by anyone with a correct mindset."

"Slade, get back 'ere!" Alvin shouted. Slade rolled his eyes and began to return to the arena to see it empty. A Whispering Death rose up behind him with a hiss. The noise made Slade turn around and glare fearlessly into the eye of the dragon.

"And what do you want?" He asked flatly.

"Well, this so-called 'trained dragon' seems to have bonded with me, Slade." Alvin said. "The dragons protect who they bond with. Remember the girl disguised as Heather? Protected by the Monstrous Nightmare."

"Only protected her because its brain is the size of the walnut." Slade said.

"Kind of like yourself."

"And what is that supposed to mean?" Slade took offense to the words spoken to him. "I'm nothing compared to these brainless

beasts."

The Whispering Death growled at him, its spikes sticking straight out of its body.

"Down, Brainless." He said then laughed at Alvin. "Just like the boys' dragon being named 'Toothless'. Brainless, Gutless, Powerless. What else need I list, dear friend?"

"Each of those have just described yourself, Slade." Alvin growled. He stepped near Slade. Slade put a hand up to block himself from Alvin's breath that reeked of old fish, ale and somehow rotten blood, Alvin continued. "Brainless; you don't think, gutless; you don't have enough to confront me yourself, powerless; well, who's the one with the trained dragon?"

Slade rolled his eyes. "There you go again with this stupid and delusional 'trained dragons' idea. How on earth do you plan on keeping it controlled?"

"Like this." Alvin smirked. "Attack!" He pointed at Slade. The Whispering Death at his side swung its tail and slashed Slade across the face, blood began to seep from his left eye and a hand flew up to cover it. The dragon pulled back with a growl and ferocious shake of its head, before it dove in to finish the job, Alvin put a hand up. "That was enough for the message to go through."

Slade sat back up with a hand clenching over his now shut left eye. He glared harshly at Alvin through his good eye, Alvin kicked him back onto the ground.

"You see, Slade, I tolerated you at first because you had a way to utterly terrify others. Us, being Outcasts, is a very useful quality to have. However..." His face turned into a glare as he stared Hudson in the eyes. "Your attitude about thinking everyone is stupid except you tends to make a mistake; one of them being talking out loud."

Slade took a deep breath, "I don't know what you're talking about."

"Getting rid of me? Poor, old Alvin will never know he's being deceived by Slade the Sadistic." He mocked. "I have news for you, Hudson, I'm not as stupid as you'd like to think. I heard your each and every word echo off the walls of the prison."

"You're mistaken." Slade said flatly.

"I'll bet." Alvin said sarcastically. "Enjoy the rest of your time rotting, Slade, \_me dear old friend.\_"

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Well, guys. This was <em>really<em> fun. I enjoyed each follow, favorite and review. You guys have no idea how much I adore you.\*\*

\*\* I still won't be stopping here so don't worry, Alyssa and Shadow's adventures with the others will continue. I have to redo my \_Gift of the Night Fury\_ story because I was forced to take it down so I'm

going to have to remake the story, then there will be \_Legend of the Boneknapper\_, \_Book of Dragons\_, and I'll even get around to doing those short \_How to Train Your Dragon\_ featurettes.\*\*

\*\* I'll also come after \_Dragons: Defenders of Berk\_ comes out and I've made a few chapters for it and the same for \_How to Train Your Dragon 2\_. (Whenever I get the DVD, that is.)\*\*

\*\* So count on me PMing you guys for any of the future stories.\*\*

\*\* Also, I'm planning on making a more original story while working on these other ones. It'll be based around Alyssa and Hiccup after the dragons are trained and accepted on Berk but with a slight twist in the tale. Here's the summary:\*\*

\*\* "Sent of the island of Berk to live with her father's people at a young age, Alyssa is sent to Berk to and deceives the villagers so the Outcasts can reclaim their place as the most-feared Vikings in the land but what happens when she remembers an old friend?"\*\*

End  
file.